2016

Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses

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2016 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses
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My Spiritual Goals for 2016

Bible Reading and Study

Preaching and Teaching

Christian Living and Qualities

This book belongs to

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2016

Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses

Containing the Report for the Service Year of 2015

2016 YEARTEXT

“Let your brotherly love continue.”

Hebrews 13:1

“Many will . . . hate one another. . . . The love of the greater number will grow cold.” (Matt. 24:10, 12) These words of Jesus foretold that a lack of love would characterize people living during the years leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. In contrast, the disciples of Christ would be identified by the love they displayed.

(John 13:35) How encouraging it must have been to the Hebrew Christians in Jerusalem to read Paul's words that acknowledged their brotherly love and exhorted them to continue displaying it!

Today, we are nearing the destruction of Satan's entire global system of things. Like our brothers in the first century, we live among those who love money, pleasures, and themselves but have little love for God or neighbor. (2 Tim. 3:1-4) Yet, brotherly love among Jehovah's Witnesses flourishes throughout the earth. May we praise Jehovah, the very personification of love, by letting our brotherly love continue.

A Letter From the Governing Body

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The prophet Isaiah humbly acknowledged that any success and prosperity that the Kingdom of Judah enjoyed was due only to the blessing of Jehovah. As we read at Isaiah 26:12, he declared: "O Jehovah, . . . everything we have done you have accomplished for us." Reflecting on all that has been accomplished during the past service year causes us to make a similar admission. Jehovah is truly doing "wonderful things that have never been done" before! (Ex. 34:10) Just think of some of the blessings that we have received from his hand.

Our official website, jw.org, has been used in a wonderful way. The site is now available in over 600 languages, and publications can be read and downloaded in over 750 languages. How effective is the website as a means of conveying the truth to honest-hearted people? Consider: A married couple became disillusioned with religion because of the hypocrisy they had observed. In their search for spiritual guidance, they discovered our website. They began regularly visiting the site to read articles from our publications and to watch videos. They even downloaded the booklet *Examining the Scriptures Daily* and began to read the daily text along with their two teenage

children. In fact, that is what they were doing the morning that Jehovah's Witnesses knocked on their door. The Witnesses learned that as a result of visiting the website, the family had made many changes. They had removed their tattoos and body piercings, discarded their religious images, discontinued celebrating worldly holidays, and stopped viewing inappropriate movies—all of this before the couple's initial personal contact with the Witnesses! As of this writing, both parents and one of the children are publishers and the parents plan to be baptized soon.

We have received many expressions of appreciation for another wonderful provision: JW Broadcasting. The monthly program is now available in over 70 languages, with more languages to come. Many families view the program during their Family Worship evening. As one brother put it, "Jehovah's organization has never been larger in size; yet, we have never felt closer to the headquarters!"

Conventions are always a highlight for Jehovah's people, and the series that was held during the 2015 service year was certainly no exception. The convention program featured 42 videos and art presentations, as well as six delightful music preludes, one at the start of each session. Regarding the program, an experienced brother observed, "It seems that none of those in attendance wanted to leave their seat during the program, because they didn't want to miss anything." A field missionary remarked regarding last year's convention, "The videos made the truth and the Kingdom more real to me."

Jehovah has also blessed us with a number of new Kingdom songs during the past year. One couple wrote: “The new songs are like a hug from Jehovah. They have brightened many dark moments for us.” Our conventions reminded us of the loving labors performed by the Watchtower orchestra and chorus in our behalf, all for the purpose of adding to the praise of Jehovah!

Has your congregation been making good use of public witnessing carts? What a blessing this form of witnessing has proved to be! Some people who live in gated communities or high-rise apartment buildings are being reached with the truth for the first time, and many other people, including inactive Witnesses, are also receiving spiritual help by this means. In January 2015, a man in South Korea approached a witnessing cart. He explained that he had recently begun to think seriously about spiritual matters. A Bible study was started. In February, he attended a congregation meeting for the first time; in March, he quit smoking. In April, he visited the branch facility in South Korea, and he continues to make remarkable spiritual progress. This is just one of the countless experiences we have received here at world headquarters.

It is our prayer that the information received at the convention will motivate many who once served actively to return to Jehovah’s loving arms before it is too late! We encourage all of you to imitate Jehovah by welcoming returning ones warmly.—Ezek. 34:16.

We encourage all of you to imitate Jehovah by welcoming returning ones warmly

Jehovah truly has blessed his people during the past service year. What more can we expect? We shall have to wait and see. In the meantime, please know that we on the Governing Body love all of you very much and we pray often in your behalf.

With every good wish,

Your brothers,

Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses

Highlights of the past year

"THE zeal of Jehovah of armies will do this," says Isaiah 9:7, when describing what God would accomplish by means of his Kingdom. Likewise, Jesus Christ, the King of that Kingdom, displayed consuming zeal for true worship throughout his earthly ministry. (John 2:17) The following reports show how Jehovah's Witnesses around the world imitate the zeal of Jehovah and Jesus by helping people to experience the love of their heavenly Father.

El Salvador: 2015 regional convention

Bolivia: Construction of the Aymara remote translation office in El Alto

“We Love JW Broadcasting So Much!”

ON October 6, 2014, a trial arrangement for an English-language Internet television station called JW Broadcasting was launched.* Since August 2015, the programs have been translated into over 70 languages so that more brothers and sisters can enjoy these spiritually upbuilding broadcasts. Many viewers from around the world have expressed appreciation for this exciting new provision. But what was involved in setting up JW Broadcasting?

Suitable space needed to be found. At the world headquarters of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Brooklyn, New

* JW Broadcasting can be accessed by visiting tv.jw.org.

York, an ideal location was chosen in the 30 Columbia Heights building. In just one week, the designated area was cleared, and the Maintenance Department started preparing the space for television production while the design team built a set that has a dignified yet modern feel. Many brothers and sisters from around the United States worked long days designing the studio and planning how to construct it quickly. Research that usually takes months was done in days, and the Purchasing Department swiftly got to work ordering hundreds of items.

Miles of cable were installed, and the team had to ensure that all the equipment worked together properly. Meanwhile, our orchestra was recording the theme music in our audio/video studios at Patterson with the help of brothers and sisters from many countries who were there for a scheduled music session. Scripts were written, reenactments were arranged, and audio/video crews at Brooklyn, Patterson, and Wallkill and in countries around the world were hard at work with video production. When the set was finished and the equipment was installed, preparation on material for the first few months of broadcasting began.

When we asked an industry professional how long all this would normally take for a studio this size, he said that it would usually take a year and a half. Our hard-working brothers and sisters did it in just two months!

The results have been heartwarming! Each monthly program, generally posted on the first Monday of the month, is watched over two million times during that month. Including all other videos, broadcasts are viewed over ten million times per month.

The JW Broadcasting recording studio,
Brooklyn, New York

How do Jehovah's people feel about this new spiritual provision? Here are just a few of the many expressions of appreciation:

"This is one of the happiest evenings in my life! Tonight my wife and I watched the May 2015 program on JW Broadcasting, and my happiness cannot be described in words. This is one of the most precious gifts I have ever received from Jehovah. We thank the Governing Body and all the brothers and sisters who worked so hard on this wonderful spiritual provision."—Indonesia.

"The program drew me closer to Jehovah's organization and the Governing Body. I know that I belong to a family where there is a lot of love."—Kenya

"Until recently, many brothers had never heard a member of the Governing Body give a talk. Now, not only can we hear them but we can see them as well. Never before have we felt so united with the Governing Body and with our worldwide brotherhood."—Kenya.

"Because my husband is not in the truth, it is difficult to do family worship with my two teenagers. So, for me personally, the broadcasts have been invaluable. They make me feel that I'm part of the organization, and they give my children and me much-needed encouragement. This is truly a blessing from Jehovah."—Britain.

"We love JW Broadcasting so much! And our prayers were answered when the program was made available in other languages. We are especially encouraged by

you brothers as we see your joyful, kind, and happy approach to worship of Jehovah. Since the launch of our TV program, we feel more like members of Jehovah's wonderful and amazing organization than ever before."—Czech Republic.

"Listening to members of the Governing Body in my own language has drawn me closer to Jehovah."—Brazil.

"I have been serving Jehovah for 16 years, but the emotion and joy that I felt today can only be compared to the way I felt when I was baptized. Thank you, dear brothers, for JW Broadcasting."—Brazil.

With Jehovah's support, we are confident that JW Broadcasting will continue to be a rich spiritual blessing for our worldwide brotherhood and will bring increasing praise and glory to Jehovah.

Speeding Up Kingdom Hall Construction

HOW thrilling it is to see that Jehovah has been speeding up the worldwide expansion of true worship! (Isa. 60:22) As a result, there continues to be a great need for Kingdom Halls. Around the world, more than 13,000 new halls need to be built or undergo major renovation.

To speed up the work in the most cost-effective way, the Governing Body has been implementing adjustments to our various construction departments. The recently formed **Worldwide Design/Construction Department** (WDC), based at world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, has been hard at work prioritiz-

ing and expediting construction and renovation projects worldwide. The **Regional Design/Construction Departments** (RDC) in the Australasia, Central Europe, South Africa, and United States branches have been coordinating projects in their respective regions, with emphasis on building Kingdom Halls more speedily and economically. RDCs also train branches in their region to maintain theocratic facilities in their branch territories. And, at each branch, a **Local Design/Construction Department** (LDC) coordinates the construction and maintenance of Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls.

In January 2015, all the elders in the United States attended an exciting meeting via video tie-in that explained a new arrangement for planning, constructing, and maintaining Kingdom Halls. This is what they learned.

Construction: Standardized designs and materials will be suited to local circumstances and will be based on guidelines from the Publishing Committee of the Governing Body. The buildings will be low maintenance and durable, yet attractive and economical.

Maintenance: Volunteers in each congregation will be trained to care for and prolong the use of our places of worship.

True, the scope and size of the construction and maintenance work is monumental. But the united efforts of God's people will do much to speed up the work in a way that makes wise use of donated funds.

How Is the Warwick Project Progressing?

THE fine progress being made at the construction site of the new world headquarters in Warwick, New York, is certainly evidence of Jehovah's backing and support.

Anthony Morris of the Governing Body said that brothers from around the world will be welcome to come and visit Warwick after the project is finished.

The main entrance to the new world headquarters, **Warwick, New York**

Reaching the Unreachable

WHILE the house-to-house ministry continues to be the primary way in which Jehovah's Witnesses spread Bible truth, use of attractive literature display tables and carts is proving to be a very effective way of preaching the good news of God's Kingdom. (Matt. 24:14) Kingdom preachers have used stands, tables, and kiosks to reach people in public places. In addition, congregations around the world have been supplied with some 250,000 literature display carts. What has the response been?

In Dar es Salaam, **Tanzania**, nearly 700 people have asked for Bible studies since the special metropolitan public witnessing program began there in 2014. Many

Tanzania: Pedestrians show an interest in literature stands in Dar es Salaam

interested ones have been attending meetings and are drawing closer to God. In one year, over 250,000 pieces of literature were taken from display carts by people from countries in Africa and overseas.

In the **Solomon Islands,** where fewer than 2,000 publishers are preaching in a vast territory of more than 300 inhabited islands, special metropolitan public witnessing has become an important method of spreading seeds of truth. In the capital city, Honiara, the brothers distributed more than 104,000 magazines and more than 23,600 brochures, many to people from islands and isolated villages where there are no Witnesses. In just one afternoon, they placed 400 copies of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* and 60 people requested home Bible studies.

Early one morning, regular pioneers Michael and Linda were setting up a literature stand next to a beachfront on Margarita Island, **Venezuela.** A man named Aníbal approached the stand and accepted a *Bible Teach* book. He told them that his father had died on that very beach seven years earlier and that since then, his mother has suffered from depression. The following week Aníbal returned and told Michael and Linda that this was the anniversary of his father's death. He took out his mobile phone, called his mother, and asked Michael to offer her words of comfort, which he did. Since then, she has called Michael and Linda several times, and they have shared comforting scriptures with her. In

one text message, Aníbal's mother wrote, "Today I am feeling much better because you have given me comfort and helped me to increase my faith."

Special metropolitan public witnessing has been organized at 127 locations in 14 cities in the **United States.** During the first seven months of the 2015 service year, 8,445 Bible studies were started! This form of witnessing has also been instrumental in helping many who were formerly associated to get involved with true worship once again. For instance, a man named Terry was looking over one of our literature displays in Los Angeles, California, so the Witness couple at the table asked if he had read our literature before. He explained that he is one of Jehovah's Witnesses but that he had been inactive for about four years. The couple read and discussed with him Ezekiel 34:11, where Jehovah says: "I myself will search for my sheep, and I will care for them." They told him about our website and JW Broadcasting. The next morning Terry e-mailed the brother, explaining that just moments before he saw the witnessing table, he had begged for God's forgiveness for neglecting congregation meetings. He had also asked for help to draw closer to Jehovah. "Then you greeted me warmly," said Terry. "You read that encouraging scripture to me and provided me with the information that I need to get back in step with Jehovah's organization. It was an answer to my prayer."

There are four special metropolitan public witnessing locations in Addis Ababa, **Ethiopia.** In three months the brothers placed 37,275 publications, and 629 people requested a visit from the Witnesses. Among the many who accepted a *Bible Teach* book was an older

man who immediately began reading it. In the past he had studied at a religious seminary, and he had questions about Jesus and God's Kingdom. So the following day, he went back to the stand to get answers to his questions. The day after that, he agreed to a Bible study, and at the end of the week, he attended his first

Ethiopia: Amharic literature on display in Addis Ababa

meeting. Now he regularly attends our meetings and is making good progress.

A Jewish man approached a literature stand in **Mexico** and asked the two brothers there if they had something on the subject of death. They told him that they had run out of the magazine that discussed death, but they offered him one that spoke about the future. The man took hold of the brother's arm and said: "I am not interested in the future. All I want is to kill myself." He then began to cry. The brothers asked him why he felt that way. "I just lost my son in death," he sobbed. So they showed him chapter 7 in the *Bible Teach* book. They read him the first two paragraphs under the subheading "When a Loved One Dies" as well as the end of the chapter, where the hope for the dead is explained. Feeling very moved, he caught hold of the brother's arm again and asked, "Is that really true?" The brothers reassured him that Jehovah is certain to fulfill that promise. "What do I have to do to see my son again?" he asked. They arranged to visit the man at his home. When they arrived at the man's home, there he was, eagerly waiting to begin studying the Bible.

"How Jehovah has blessed this program!" said a traveling overseer who helped set up the special metropolitan public witnessing program in New York. "Not only has it proved to be a very effective method of reaching tens of thousands of people but it has also brought us into contact with many inactive or disfellowshipped ones—'lost sheep'—that are now being helped to return to the fold."—Ezekiel 34:15, 16.

The Light Keeps Getting Brighter

BECAUSE true worshippers acknowledge Jehovah as the Source of spiritual light, they eagerly pray that God's 'light and truth' will lead and guide them. (Ps. 43:3) While the world is in dense spiritual darkness, the true God continues to shed light upon his people. As a result, their path "is like the bright morning light that grows brighter and brighter." (Prov. 4:18) Increasing light from Jehovah continues to illuminate their way organizationally, doctrinally, and morally. What are some of our beliefs that have been clarified in recent years?

2012

Mordecai and Esther "divide spoil"—Gen. 49:27
w12 1/1 p. 29

Toes of image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream
—Dan. 2:41-43
w12 6/15 p. 16

"All these kingdoms"
—Dan. 2:44
w12 6/15 p. 17

Ruin caused by "fierce-looking king"
—Dan. 8:23, 24
w12 6/15 p. 16

When the seventh world power emerged
w12 6/15 pp. 15, 19

2013

"Faithful and discreet slave"—Matt. 24:45-47	*w13* 7/15 pp. 8, 20-25
"Evil slave"—Matt. 24:48-51	*w13* 7/15 p. 24
Anointed not to survive Armageddon on earth	*w13* 7/15 p. 5
'Assyrian invades our land'—Mic. 5:5	*w13* 11/15 p. 20
Chosen ones gathered—Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27	*w13* 7/15 p. 5
Great tribulation	*w13* 7/15 pp. 3-8

Illustration of the wheat and the weeds—Matt. 13:24-30 *w13* 7/15 pp. 13-14

Jesus comes, arrives
—Matt. chaps. 24 and 25
w13 7/15 pp. 7-8, 24

Jesus inspects spiritual temple 1914-1919—Mal. 3:1-4
w13 7/15 pp. 11-12

יהוה

Meaning of name Jehovah
New World Translation p. 1735

2014

Appointment of elders and ministerial servants *w14* 11/15 pp. 28-29

Basis first-century Jews had for being "in expectation" of the Messiah—Luke 3:15 *w14* 2/15 pp. 26-27; *w14* 6/15 p. 22

Duration of cleansing of spiritual temple—Mal. 3:1-4 *w14* 11/15 p. 30

Marriage in the resurrection—Luke 20:34-36 *w14* 8/15 pp. 29-30

"Solid foundation of God"—2 Tim. 2:19
w14 7/15 pp. 8-9, 13

Two witnesses—Rev. chap. 11 *w14* 11/15 p. 30

2015

Gog of Magog—Ezek. chaps. 38 and 39 *w15* 5/15 pp. 29-30

Head covering for sister conducting a Bible study *w15* 2/15 p. 30

Illustration of the talents
—Matt. 25:14-30
w15 3/15 pp. 20-24

Illustration of the ten virgins—Matt. 25: 1-13
w15 3/15 pp. 13-16

Types and antitypes
w15 3/15 pp. 9-11, 17-18; *w15* 6/15 p. 32

Branch Dedications

"MY HEART is overwhelmed with joy," said a sister at the dedication program of the **Madagascar** branch, which was held on Saturday, January 24, 2015. She and 583 other guests were thrilled to see the new 19-room residence, as well as the enlarged dining room and the renovated kitchen. More office space was provided for the Service, Accounting, and Local/Design Construction departments. In addition, the Audio/Video and Sign Language departments received new studios, and the Braille Transcription Department was established. After hearing a review of the history of the preaching work in Madagascar, the guests enjoyed the dedication talk delivered by Mark Sanderson of the Governing Body.

Jehovah's people in Jakarta, **Indonesia**, sighed with relief when floods in the city subsided in time for the dedication of the new branch facilities on February 14, 2015. The branch now occupies one floor of a 42-story office tower and 12 floors in a nearby apartment tower. Several Bethel departments are located in smaller buildings nearby. Anthony Morris of the Governing Body delivered the dedication talk, and the following day, 15,257 gathered at a soccer stadium to hear him speak on the topic "Keep Enduring in Work That Is Good." The program was streamed to 11,189 who attended at 41 other locations, making it the largest gathering of Jehovah's people ever held in Indonesia. Ronald Jacka, one of the first missionaries to go to Indonesia, said: "When I arrived in 1951, there were only 26 publishers in the entire country. But today, more than 26,000 have attended this special program. Jehovah has truly blessed his people in Indonesia!"

New 19-room residence at the **Madagascar** branch

New World Translation in More Languages

AS OF August 31, 2015, the *New World Translation* had been translated in whole or in part into 129 languages. The Bible is also available on jw.org in 129 languages, including seven sign languages. The following editions were released during the 2015 service year:

RELEASE DATE	LOCATION	LANGUAGE	EDITION
September 5, 2014	Malaysia	Malay	Greek Scriptures*
September 6, 2014	South Korea	Korean	Revised Edition
September 19, 2014	Georgia	Azerbaijani	Complete Bible
September 26, 2014	Kazakhstan	Kazakh	Complete Bible
October 10, 2014	Ghana	Ga	Greek Scriptures*
November 14, 2014	Philippines	Hiligaynon	Complete Bible
December 12, 2014	Nigeria	Isoko	Greek Scriptures*
December 13, 2014	Ethiopia	Amharic	Complete Bible
December 19, 2014	Fiji	Fijian	Complete Bible
December 26, 2014	Mexico	Tzotzil	Greek Scriptures*
December 29, 2014	Ghana	Ewe	Complete Bible
March 22, 2015	Brazil	Portuguese	Revised Edition
May 9, 2015	Zambia	Luvale	Complete Bible
July 17, 2015	Haiti	Haitian Creole	Complete Bible
August 28, 2015	Kenya	Kikuyu	Greek Scriptures*
August 28, 2015	Congo (Kinshasa)	Kongo	Complete Bible

* This is the first time that any part of the *New World Translation* has been released in this language.

Russia: Sharing the good news in Moscow

Legal Report

Legal Registration

Legal registration is not essential for Jehovah's Witnesses to carry out religious activity. However, registration allows us to own or lease property for meetings and to import our religious literature.

- In 2004, Russian courts liquidated the legal entity used by Jehovah's Witnesses in Moscow. As a result, our brothers in Moscow faced increased hostility. Police officers harassed them, people attacked some of them in the public ministry, and owners of meeting places canceled rental contracts, leaving our brothers with no place to meet for worship. A 2010 judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) confirmed that **Russia** had violated the rights of Jehovah's Witnesses in Moscow and ordered the restoration of the legal

entity. We are pleased to report that on May 27, 2015, the Moscow Department of the Russian Federation Ministry of Justice registered a new Local Religious Organization of Jehovah's Witnesses in Moscow.

Taxation

The legal entities used by Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide are generally tax-exempt, as are most religious and charitable organizations. At times, however, governments refuse to recognize our tax-exempt status.

- In **Sweden,** the authorities assert that Bethel is a commercial business "employing" Bethelites and not a religious community of special full-time ministers. The state has assessed tens of thousands of euros in employer/employee taxes against Bethel and individual Bethelites. To address this issue, Witnesses in Sweden have filed claims in domestic courts and have submitted six separate applications to the ECHR.

Neutrality and Conscientious Objection to Military Service

Jehovah's people take seriously the Bible's command to "beat their swords into plowshares" and not "learn war anymore." (Isa. 2:4) They maintain their neutrality even though some governments make no provision for alternative civilian service.

- Current legislation in **South Korea** does not recognize the right of conscientious objection. Over the past 60 years, more than 18,000 Witness men have been imprisoned for refusing military service. Almost every Witness in the country has experienced the imprisonment of a friend or a family member. In 2004 and 2011, the Constitutional Court of South Korea held that such imprisonment is constitutional. In July 2015, however, the Court conducted a public hearing to examine the matter again. Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide pray for a resolution

to this long-standing issue so that young brothers in South Korea will no longer face imprisonment for their faith.

• Three of Jehovah's Witnesses in **Eritrea** have begun their 22nd year in confinement for conscientious objection to military service. Paulos Eyassu, Negede Teklemariam, and Isaac Mogos have never been formally charged or had the opportunity to defend themselves in a court of law. Along with over 50 other brothers and sisters, they continue to maintain their integrity despite harsh treatment and deplorable prison conditions. We are confident that Jehovah 'hears the sighing' of those imprisoned for their faith and will act in their behalf. —Ps. 79:11.

• In **Ukraine,** Vitaliy Shalaiko was summoned in August 2014 to report for military service during mobilization. As a conscientious objector, he refused military service but expressed his willingness to perform alternative civilian service. The prosecutor charged Brother Shalaiko with evading military mobilization, but both the trial and appellate courts found him not guilty. The appeal court reasoned that concern for State security is not a justification for limiting guaranteed rights and

Ukraine: Vitaliy Shalaiko enjoys sharing in the ministry

that "the right to conscientious objection cannot be restricted in the interests of national security." The prosecutor appealed again. On June 23, 2015, the High Specialized Court of Ukraine for Civil and Criminal Cases upheld the decisions of the lower courts. It thus confirmed that the right to conscientious objection and alternative service applies even during national emergencies.

Regarding the positive outcome of the case, Brother Shalaiko says: "I was strengthened by the words of Jeremiah 1:19. I was prepared for any outcome—the most important thing was to be faithful to Jehovah. I am sure that he will never abandon me but will give me the power to remain faithful. However, the outcome was beyond all my expectations. I was acquitted in all three court instances. And during all the hearings, I felt the support of the brothers. I never felt abandoned."

Neutrality and Patriotic Ceremonies

Patriotic ceremonies present another challenge to Christian neutrality. Young ones in particular may be pressured to compromise their integrity to Jehovah, as school authorities may try to force students to sing the national anthem or salute the flag.

- In the Karongi District of **Rwanda,** school officials charged several Witness students with disrespecting the national anthem because they refused to sing it. The students were expelled from school and even jailed. On November 28, 2014, the Intermediate Court of Karongi exonerated the students and ruled that their refusal to sing the national anthem was not an act of disrespect. In other African countries, such as **Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea,** and **Malawi,** young Witnesses have faced the same issue and in some cases have also been expelled from school. Our brothers in these countries are making efforts to inform government officials and school authorities regarding the neutral position of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Honduras: Mirna Paz and Bessy Serrano were eventually given diplomas

• In December 2013, a public school in Lepaera, **Honduras,** denied high school diplomas to two Witness students because they refused to sing the national anthem and pledge allegiance to the flag. In order to resolve this problem, two lawyers who are Jehovah's Witnesses met with a representative of the Ministry of Education and shared with him legal precedents from other countries that support the stance of Witness students. The official was kind and agreed to allow the students and their parents to present the facts in writing before the legal director of the Secretariat of Education in Honduras. After examining their complaint, he issued a directive on July 29, 2014, stating that education "should be available to [all in] society without discrimination of any nature" and ordered that diplomas be issued to the Witness students.

Government Discrimination

In every nation, as Jehovah's Witnesses, we obey Jesus' command to share the Kingdom good news with our neighbors, to gather together with fellow believers for worship, and to study God's Word regularly. We also take seriously the Bible's command to inculcate Jehovah's laws into the hearts of our children and to "abstain . . . from blood." (Acts 15:20; Deut. 6:

5-7) At times, our obedience to these commands brings us into conflict with governmental authorities who may misunderstand our position.

• In the state of Florida, **U.S.A.**, a trial judge awarded a non-Witness mother the sole right to direct the religious education of her three children. The Witness father was ordered not to provide any religious training that conflicted with the Catholic faith. The father appealed the trial court's order, and on August 18, 2014, the court of appeals reversed the trial court's restrictions. Relying on well-settled precedent, the court wrote: "Restrictions upon a noncustodial parent's right to expose his or her child to his or her religious beliefs have consistently been overturned in the absence of a clear, affirmative showing that the religious activities at issue will be harmful to the child."

The ruling gives the children the right to unrestricted access to Jehovah God's beneficial instruction and guidance. They are all making fine spiritual progress as they associate with the local congregation. The father said: "Enduring this situation is definitely refining me. I have had some tests of my faith lately, but Jehovah has helped me stand firm! I know that persecution is part of what we choose when we decide to serve Jehovah."

• Sister Efigenia Semente, a mother of three children in **Namibia**, faced a serious challenge to her integrity. While she was in the hospital giving birth to her third child, complications arose, and some of the medical staff as well as her non-Witness family obtained a court order to force a blood transfusion. Sister Semente vigorously resisted the transfusion and took legal action to defend her right to choose her own treatment. On June 24, 2015, the Supreme Court of Namibia upheld Sister Semente's claims, stating that "the right to choose what can and cannot be done to one's body, whether one is a parent or not, is an inalienable human right." Sister Semente

Namibia: Efigenia Semente with her three children

said: “We felt Jehovah’s hand like never before. It is so wonderful to be part of this brotherhood. Jehovah really cares.”

- Witnesses in **Switzerland** have enjoyed public witnessing on the streets of major cities. However, the city of Geneva issued an order prohibiting the use of “stands that directly or indirectly spread information of a religious nature in the public domain.” The Witnesses filed a complaint in court, emphasizing that a general ban on spreading religious information using a stand “significantly infringes on the freedom of religion and opinion.” The court agreed, and the Witnesses have been successful in working with local authorities to establish an appropriate location and time for public witnessing using an information stand.

- Government officials in **Azerbaijan** have increased their efforts to suppress the religious activity of Jehovah’s Witnesses. The Ministry of National Security regularly summons individual Witnesses for questioning. This agency also searches Witnesses’ homes for religious literature not approved by the State for import. The international community expressed

shock when in February 2015, agents of the Ministry of National Security detained two Witnesses, Irina Zakharchenko and Valida Jabrayilova, for simply sharing Bible teachings with their neighbors. Although we are saddened by such mistreatment, we rejoice that the publishers in Azerbaijan have maintained their zeal and are courageous in sharing the "good news of the Kingdom" with their neighbors.—Matt. 24:14.

- Jehovah's Witnesses in **Russia** face unrelenting governmental interference in their religious activity. To date, 80 religious publications of Jehovah's Witnesses have been declared "extremist" by the Russian Federation. This means that distributing or possessing copies of any of these "extremist" publications, such as *My Book of Bible Stories,* is illegal. Additionally, in December 2014, the Russian Federation Supreme Court declared our website, jw.org, to be "extremist." Internet providers throughout Russia have blocked access to jw.org, and promoting the site is considered illegal. Since March 2015, customs officials have not allowed any shipments of Witness literature to enter the country, even Bibles and literature that Russian courts had previously examined and declared free of any signs of extremism.

Legal action continues in the city of Taganrog, where authorities have charged 16 publishers with the "crime" of organizing and attending religious meetings. In the city of Samara, authorities obtained a court order to liquidate our legal entity on the grounds that it is "extremist." Despite these many challenges, our brothers and sisters in Russia are determined to render "God's things to God," not giving in to such interference.—Matt. 22:21.

Dispatches
News From Around the World

Reaching Out to All Canadians

The video *Why Study the Bible?* has now been translated into eight native languages in order to address the needs of the **Canada** branch territory. During a ten-day Nunavik Arctic campaign in October 2014, the video was shown in Inuktitut to almost every household in 14 communities, representing a population of over 12,000 people.

The Manager Was Impressed

In September 2014, the Seoul international convention was held at the Sangam World Cup Stadium in

South Korea: The 2014 international convention in Seoul

South Korea. The more than 56,000 in attendance enjoyed the program. The manager of the stadium expressed his appreciation for the good conduct and cooperation of the Witnesses during the event. He said: "Everyone conducted themselves with good manners. I was amazed to see them cleaning the stadium better than our professional cleaning personnel. I wish our personnel had the same attitude when doing their work. If we are to practice religion properly, we need to become like Jehovah's Witnesses."

Jehovah Gave the Needed Training

In May 2012, the government of **Sweden** rejected an application by Jehovah's Witnesses to receive the

economic benefits granted to other religious organizations. The Governing Body gave the approval for the decision to be appealed to the country's Supreme Administrative Court.

The Court decided to hold an oral hearing before reaching a decision. Several brothers from various countries met to consider how to answer questions that might be asked at the hearing. The practice session took place at a Kingdom Hall in Stockholm.

During the practice session, the doorbell rang at the hall. A brother opened the door, and two girls, aged 13 and 14, introduced themselves. They said that they wanted to ask some questions about Jehovah's Witnesses. The brother recalls, "I wanted to tell them to come back another day, since we were busy and did not have time for this sort of interruption."

Nevertheless, the brother decided to talk to them. The girls had many questions, some of which were quite specific regarding social issues and voting in elections. Afterward, the brother returned to the rest of the brothers and told them what questions the girls had asked and how he had answered them.

The next day, the brothers were surprised during the hearing because the Court asked many of the same questions that the girls had asked. A brother representing the organization says: "I felt very calm, although I could have been quite nervous because I was standing before the country's most distinguished lawyers. But I felt that Jehovah had already shown that he was with us by giving us the training we needed the day before."

The Court ruled in our favor, and the case was referred back to the government for a new decision.

Ken's Bag of Rice

Ken, who is six years old, lives in **Haiti.** He was happy to learn that soon a new Kingdom Hall would be built for his congregation. He decided to make a secret contribution box and hide it in his room. Instead of spending the allowance his parents gave him for school, he put it in his box. He did this faithfully until the Kingdom Hall construction group arrived to begin work on the project. He then gave them his secret box, which contained enough money to buy a large bag of rice. For many days, Ken's rice was served at the work site during the noon meal.

Orders From the General

During much of the past year, it was necessary to obtain special permission to enter regions of **Sierra Leone** that were quarantined because of the Ebola outbreak. For example, circuit overseers needed to obtain badges and vehicle passes to enter those areas, and so did couriers who were transporting literature and correspondence. Disaster Relief Committee members needed to take in infrared thermometers, bleach, and food. Amazingly, the necessary documentation was always provided.

One experience was particularly faith-strengthening. The brothers submitted a written application requesting 34 badges and 11 vehicle passes, but they had to meet with an army general to have the request approved. Two brothers from the branch office met with the general on the day that they had hoped to pick up the badges and passes. However, the application was nowhere to be found. The brothers were asked to look for it themselves among the piles of applications on

hand, but they could not find it. At that point, the general told his secretary that he was closing his office and that no applications would be considered until two weeks later. Silently, the brothers prayed fervently for Jehovah's help in the matter. The general then looked at the brothers and asked, "How many badges and passes do you need?" When he was told the number, he rose from his chair and bellowed, "That is too many!"

The brothers explained the nature of our work and how our relief supplies were helping to deal with the Ebola crisis. The general then paused, looked at his secretary, and said, "Give them everything they need."

Guinea and Sierra Leone: Hand sanitation procedures were implemented at all Kingdom Halls

Worldwide

LANDS

240

PEAK PUBLISHERS

8,220,105

TOTAL HOURS SPENT IN THE FIELD MINISTRY

1,933,473,727

BIBLE STUDIES

9,708,968

Preaching and Teaching Earth Wide

Cape Verde

LANDS
58

POPULATION
1,082,464,150

PUBLISHERS
1,453,694

BIBLE STUDIES
3,688,959

Africa

Motorcycle Witnessing

Motorcycle taxis, locally called zems, are a favorite means of transportation in cities in southern **Benin.** Désiré, an auxiliary pioneer, installed an audio player on his zem and pointed two loudspeakers directly at the passenger seat. He continually plays recordings of publications and Bible dramas. When a passenger hops onto his zem, it usually does not take long before he or

Burundi: Nolla showing copies of *The Watchtower* to the men who had asked her for charcoal

she is listening attentively. Many become so engrossed in what they are hearing that upon arriving at their destination, they hesitate and even refuse to get off the zem until the end of the recording. Désiré says: "I would, of course, like them to pay and leave so that I can find another passenger, but I know that their hearing the good news is more important than money. Besides, I get to place a lot of literature this way."

A Child Who Was Persistent

Nolla is a six-year-old girl who lives with her family in the hills of **Burundi.** One day, as the family was cooking a meal using a small charcoal stove, two men who were working next door asked for some of the hot charcoal to start their own fire. Nolla, who is not yet in school, was tending the fire when the men arrived. She allowed them to take a few pieces of charcoal. A short time later, Nolla walked by the two men and saw that they had used the hot charcoal to light a cigarette. This disturbed her greatly, and she said to them, "If I had known that you were going to use the charcoal to light a cigarette, I would not have given it to you." She then remembered seeing at the Kingdom Hall a magazine with a picture of a cigarette on it. She ran to the Kingdom Hall and obtained two copies of the June 1, 2014, *Watchtower,* which dealt with smoking. Nolla returned to the men, gave them the magazines, and insisted that they read them right away. Later, she found them again and gave them invitations to the upcoming regional convention. Amazed by the persistence of this young

girl, the men were moved to attend two days of the convention. During the lunch break, Nolla saw them and invited them to share a simple meal with her family. Impressed by what they saw and heard at the convention, both men began studying the Bible.

Witnessing in Prisons

Elders in **Liberia** are sharing the Kingdom message in various government correctional facilities. Yves, a special pioneer in the capital, Monrovia, explains: "In March, three inmates qualified as unbaptized publishers. This brings the number of publishers at the Monrovia Central Prison to six." How do they share in the ministry? "They meet for field service every Wednesday and Saturday," explains Yves. "Then, they are allowed to go from cell to cell, sharing the Bible's message of hope with fellow inmates." Many prisoners now enjoy their own personal Bible study and attend the meetings held at the prison. A representative from the branch office delivered a public talk to 79 inmates at that prison. Six other prisons hold regular Bible study classes and are seeing positive changes among the inmates.

"We Desperately Need Help"

Great efforts were made to help interested ones in isolated places to attend the Memorial. For example, the San, also known as Bushmen, are the original inhabitants of southern Africa. They used to live a simple, nomadic life as hunters

Benin: Désiré uses an audio player on his motorcycle taxi to share the good news with his passengers

and gatherers. For the 2015 Memorial, Glenn, a special pioneer who serves in northern **Namibia**, arranged to hold the Memorial in a remote San village 170 miles east of Rundu. That was the second time a Memorial had been held there. On both occasions, the village authorities gave Jehovah's Witnesses permission to use the magistrate's courtroom free of charge. A total of 232 attended the Memorial in spite of heavy rains before and during the commemoration. The Bushmen in this area speak the Khwe language, which is known for its numerous click sounds. The talk was translated from English into Khwe. Because there is no Bible in Khwe, color slides were projected on the wall to explain such verses as Isaiah 35:5, 6. Glenn, who conducts a number of progressive Bible studies in the area, reports: "I have been visiting here once a month for the past two years. I camp in the area for a few days. Progress has been slow because of the language and the distance. We desperately need help. When I went to the authorities to make arrangements for the Memorial this year, a member of the committee governing the community asked me if we would please build a place of worship in the area. He said that the committee would provide the land and would put up the building at their own expense! All we needed to do was provide the 'pastor' or at least train one of them to be the pastor!"

Namibia: Two publishers gladly share the good news with a Himba woman

LANDS
57

POPULATION
982,501,976

PUBLISHERS
4,102,272

BIBLE STUDIES
4,345,532

The Americas

A Candlelight Study in a Field

A special pioneer couple working in an isolated territory in **Brazil** learned about Valdira, a woman who had studied the Bible 13 years earlier. After traveling down a dusty dirt road with dangerous river crossings, the pioneers found Valdira, who was anxious to resume her study. Because she lived in a remote part of the country, special arrangements had to be made. Though

Valdira owned a mobile phone, the only place where she could receive a strong signal was in a field far from her home. Moreover, Valdira could study only after nine o'clock in the evening. Imagine the scene: A young woman sitting alone in a field at night using a mobile phone to have a Bible study by candlelight.

Valdira listens to the Sunday meetings on her phone as well. She goes to the field with her Bible, her *Watchtower,* and her songbook to listen in. When it is raining, she also brings her umbrella.

In March, Valdira traveled some 60 miles to the local Kingdom Hall to attend the special meeting where the revised Portuguese *New World Translation* was released. She loved receiving a copy of the new Bible. When commended for all her efforts to study the Bible, Valdira said, "Oh, it is not all that difficult!"

"I Knew That One Day You Would Come"

The Yukpa are an Amerindian people who live in **Colombia.** Before visiting one of their communities, Frank, a special pioneer, was warned about the local chief, John Jairo, who had chased away several evangelical groups who wanted to preach there. On one occasion, when John found out that a minister of theirs was collecting tithes, he sent him scampering by firing gunshots into the air.

Frank recalls: "When we reached the community, the first person who listened to us was none other than one of John Jairo's daughters! After we showed her the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* she immediately said, 'This is the religion I want to belong to!' Then

she ran to tell her father about our arrival. He immediately summoned us. Nervous, we met with him. Before we could say anything, he said: 'I know that you have the true religion. Eight years ago in a garbage dump in Becerril, I found a book like the one you gave my daughter. I read it, and since then, I've been waiting for you to come here. I knew that one day you would come. I want you to teach the Bible to me, to my family, and to this community. Our doors are open to you.'

"Those words made tears well up in our eyes. The whole community gathered to listen to our preaching, and John Jairo interpreted what we said into their lan-

Colombia: Frank, a special pioneer, conducting a Bible study with a group of Yukpa people

guage. When we were leaving, he lent us a little donkey to carry our baggage. We are now conducting 47 Bible studies with 120 Yukpa people from different communities, John Jairo and his daughter included."

A Persecutor Changes His Course

José, a former devout Catholic, lives in **Ecuador.** He writes: "I had a burning hatred for Jehovah's Witnesses. I persecuted them for ten years. I would organize mobs, physically mistreat the Witnesses, and accuse them of being thieves. Then, at the police station, I would insist on personally putting the padlock on their prison cell. Once, we destroyed the automobile belonging to a

Witness. Another time, we threw a motorcycle of theirs into a gorge.

"Then, in 2010, I contracted swine flu. My doctor ordered me to leave my home high in the Andes and go to the warmer climate on the coast to recuperate. I went to a small farm that belonged to a relative in a coastal area and ended up having to care for the farm by myself. Being all alone, I was desperate to talk with anyone. Who came to the farm? Jehovah's Witnesses! Out of sheer loneliness, I conversed with them and was amazed at how they used the Bible. I accepted a Bible study out of curiosity. After studying for six months, I attended my first meeting. I was so impressed by the kind and loving interest shown to me that I asked myself, 'Are these perhaps God's true servants?' I progressed and was finally baptized in April 2014.

"I felt remorse for having persecuted the Witnesses. However, Jehovah gave me an opportunity to make amends to some extent. At a circuit assembly on October 4, 2014, I was interviewed about my past as an opposer and was asked, 'If you had the chance to apologize to any of those you persecuted, who would it be?' I instantly replied that it would be a brother by the name of Edmundo but that I had no idea how to find him. Unbeknownst to me, the circuit overseer had him backstage. The audience was moved to tears as Edmundo and I embraced each other and cried together on the platform."

"Please, Jehovah, Have Your Witnesses Find Me"

The midday sun was blazing hot when a field service group of sisters in Asunción, **Paraguay,** finished the territory assigned to them. However, they decided to put

forth the extra effort to preach at a few nearby homes. One of the Witnesses said, “Maybe someone is praying.” At a corner house, a young woman greeted the sisters at her door with a smile and asked if they were Jehovah’s Witnesses. She explained that a month earlier she had moved from Bolivia to Paraguay in connection with her work. She had been studying the Bible in Bolivia before she moved. No one in her new neighborhood could tell her where to find the Witnesses, so she prayed, “Please, Jehovah, have your Witnesses find me.” That very day the sisters called and a Bible study was arranged.

Paraguay: A woman asked the sisters if they were Jehovah’s Witnesses

LANDS
49

POPULATION
4,409,131,383

PUBLISHERS
718,716

BIBLE STUDIES
766,364

Asia and the Middle East

One Hundred Hours for One Hundred Years

In one **Asian country**, a well-known television actress and model accepted a Bible study. She immediately began to apply what she was learning and got rid of her spiritistic literature and Buddhist idols.

One of the woman's close associates pleaded with her, saying: "Why don't you stop study-

ing for just three years and concentrate on your career? After that, you can start studying again."

The woman replied: "I have waited 24 years to find Jehovah. Why would I put off learning about him for another three years?"

The very week she was to join the Theocratic Ministry School, a film company contacted her. They offered her a lucrative four-year contract on the condition that she accept any movie role she was given. She declined the offer. In May 2014, she qualified as an unbaptized publisher, and as August approached, she decided that she would preach 100 hours that month. When asked the reason why, she said, "I want to celebrate the 100-year rule of Jesus by preaching one hour for every year he's been ruling!" She achieved her goal. In January 2015, she was baptized, and she now serves as an auxiliary pioneer.

Making the Best of a Night in Prison

In **Sri Lanka,** four sisters set off by bus to preach in an unassigned territory that was predominantly Buddhist. On their second day of preaching, a monk and a taxi driver accosted the sisters. Soon an angry crowd of about 30 people surrounded them. The police arrived, took the sisters to the police station, and held them overnight in prison cells, even though no charge of any wrongdoing was made. They were put with hardened criminals and were subjected to verbal abuse and filthy language, yet their presence in the prison opened opportunities to give a witness. One of the

CHILAW
525
KURUNEGALA

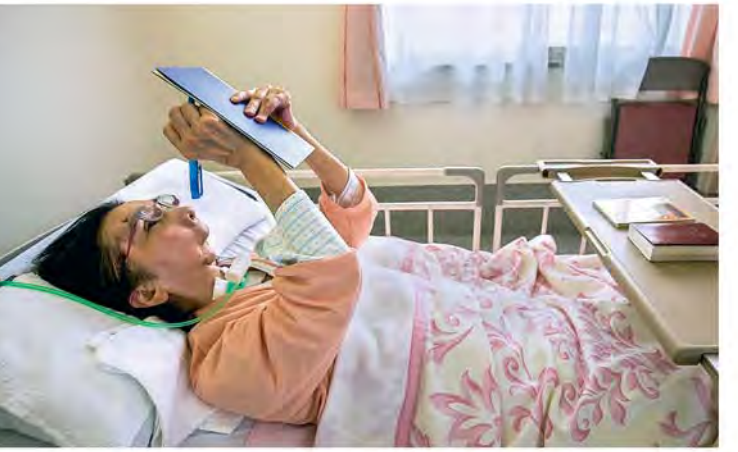
sisters said: "I was confined with murderers, but I was able to talk to them about the truth. They were surprised that I was there, and they had many questions about my beliefs. One person even asked me, 'Why are you so happy?' "

The Supreme Court of Sri Lanka has accepted our submission for a fundamental rights case against the police for holding prisoners without a valid charge. The case is still pending.

Help for a Bedridden Woman

Michiko, a pioneer sister in **Japan**, was conducting a study in sign language with an elderly woman in a hospital. The sister asked the staff if there were any other patients with whom she could talk. Michiko then met Kazumi, who could hear but could not speak. Kazumi was bedridden following a car accident at the age of 23 and was unable to swallow food or even drink water. She had many questions and readily accepted a Bible study.

Michiko asked the questions, and Kazumi used her hands to point to the answers in the paragraphs or to write them out. When Kazumi obtained a cell phone, Michiko was able to consider the day's text with her each morning. Although Kazumi weakened physically, she kept growing spiritually to the point of expressing a desire to become one of Jehovah's Witnesses. At the age of 61, after studying for 13 years, Kazumi finally became an unbaptized publisher.



Japan: Kazumi enjoys writing warm, upbuilding letters

Because Kazumi is bedridden, the congregation arranged for her to listen in to all the meetings and assembly programs. Various sisters in the congregation read Kazumi's prepared comments at the meetings.

Kazumi writes warm, upbuilding letters that are tailor-made for each Bible student who attends the meetings. She witnesses to the hospital staff and to those who visit her. Kazumi tells them, "If you study the Bible, you will be happy."

A Monk Learns the Truth

In a **Southeast Asian country,** a sister went to an optician at a hospital, where she met a monk. She asked him, "Would you like to have perfect health and live forever in a beautiful place?" A friendly discussion en-

sued, and she gave him the brochure *Listen to God*. The monk gave her his phone number, which she passed on to a brother in the congregation. Soon afterward, the brother contacted the monk and invited him to attend the special talk. The monk thoroughly enjoyed the meeting, especially the singing of the Kingdom songs, and was very impressed that everyone gave him such a warm welcome.

When the monk asked if the Witnesses have religious universities or seminaries, the brother explained that we conduct personal Bible study courses and offered to study with him. By the next week, the monk had finished chapter 1 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* He continued to study, began attending the meetings, and also gave comments during the *Watchtower* Study.

When the monk attended a circuit assembly, the branch representative invited him to visit Bethel. The following week the monk traveled some ten hours to get to Bethel, where he was given a warm welcome. At the end of February 2015, he left the monkhood and continues to enjoy studying the Bible and participating in Christian meetings.

Lost, but Found Again

Recently, pioneers were sent to northeastern **India,** where the good news had not been preached in many years. The pioneers found much interest and wanted to find a suitable place to hold meetings. While going to a Bible study, they saw a building under construction and thought of inquiring about it. As they walked a little farther down the road, they decided to

go back. Behind the building, they met an elderly woman and told her that they were Jehovah's Witnesses. Her face lit up. "I am also one of Jehovah's Witnesses," she said and warmly welcomed them into her house. She showed them her collection of literature from the 1970's and 1980's. She had studied with pioneers 30 years earlier and had attended some meetings despite opposition from her husband. She was convinced that she had found the truth but later lost contact with the organization when the pioneers left the area. All her children became members of various churches, but she refused to attend any church.

India: An interested woman shows her literature collection from the 1970's and 1980's

Recently, the woman's children had started pressuring her to enroll as a member of the Catholic Church so that she could have a Catholic burial when she died. Her own sister even insisted on taking her to the Catholic church to enroll, but on the way there, they were in a traffic jam and had to return home. Her sister said that they would go again the next day, but she got sick. It was that very afternoon that the pioneers called on the interested woman! She is now studying the Bible again, attending meetings, and encouraging her children and grandchildren to study as well.

LANDS
47

POPULATION
743,421,605

PUBLISHERS
1,614,244

BIBLE STUDIES
842,091

Europe

Mistaken Identity Leads to a Bible Study

The international convention held in London, **England**, was an exciting event for visiting delegates as well as for local Witnesses. Andrew and Elizabeth visited a London hotel, intending to greet some of the international delegates. Noticing a well-dressed woman in the reception area and assuming she was a delegate, Elizabeth greeted

her with a warm embrace. The woman reacted with surprise, so Elizabeth apologized. "I am sorry," she said. "I thought you were a delegate!"

"A delegate for what?" asked the woman.

Elizabeth pointed to the sign on the reception desk welcoming Jehovah's Witnesses and was pleasantly surprised by the woman's response. "How lovely!" she said. "Do I look the part?"

In the ensuing conversation, Elizabeth found out that the woman's name was Vivien, that she was originally from Nigeria, and that she and Elizabeth lived only a few minutes away from each other. Vivien accepted the offer of a Bible study and wanted her children to join in too. Andrew and Elizabeth contacted Vivien at home, and it was their turn to be greeted with a warm embrace. Their chance meeting in central London had clearly made a positive impression on Vivien. When Andrew and Elizabeth showed Vivien the *Bible Teach* book, she surprised them by saying that she already had a copy and was reading it with four of her children. After being told that this was the book that comes with a free home Bible study, Vivien responded excitedly, "Let's start now!"

A Letter From a Roma Brother

In November 2014, the first Romany congregation in **Slovakia** was formed. At a recent circuit assembly, 21 Romany-speaking publishers got baptized. All were from the same village. At the Memorial, the attendance

Slovakia: Two Kingdom preachers happily share the good news with a Roma woman

at the Romany congregation was 495. One newly baptized brother wrote the following:

"I am of the Roma people from Žehra, Slovakia. Where I live, many white people view us as Gypsies and feel that we are dirty and that we lie and steal. When I wanted to go to church, I was told by the custodian that I didn't belong there and should go away. After experiences like that, you can imagine my view of white people. Then Jehovah's Witnesses invited me to the Kingdom Hall. I went with great suspicion, expecting to be disappointed again. I was surprised that even before entering the Kingdom Hall, a white man shook my hand and warmly welcomed me. During the public talk, I wasn't able to pay attention. I could only think, 'How is it possible that everyone is so nice to me?'

"That night, I couldn't sleep at all because I kept thinking about what had happened at the Kingdom Hall. So I decided to go again to find out if the kindness I had been shown was just a coincidence. That time, the people there were even nicer and treated me like an old friend. I never stopped attending the meetings, and I eventually got baptized. After my baptism, the kindness of the brothers never changed, and they continue to show that they value me. At times, they even share with me better food than they themselves eat! I always want to be part of this organization, and Jehovah is the God I want to serve forever."

A Prayer to Share the Good News Is Answered

A sister named Aysel was traveling by bus from the town of Ganja to Baku in **Azerbaijan.** She prayed to Jehovah, expressing her desire to talk to someone about the Bible on the way. Although Aysel already had an

assigned seat on the bus, a woman insisted that Aysel sit next to her instead. Aysel began talking with the woman and was eventually able to steer the conversation toward the Bible. The woman explained that she loved Jesus and wanted to know more about him. Aysel and the woman exchanged phone numbers and agreed to meet again. The woman asked Aysel to bring her a Bible if possible.

After Aysel returned to Ganja, she visited the interested woman at her workplace. The woman mentioned that she has a "prayer book" that she reads every day. Our sister was surprised to find out that the so-called prayer book was actually the booklet *Examining the Scriptures Daily* from 2013! A Bible study was started, and Aysel was delighted that Jehovah gave her the courage to witness informally.

A Letter of Thanks From a Prison Inmate

From **Spain** comes the following letter:

"First of all, I'd like to thank you for the effort you are making to reach all sorts of people with the Bible's message.

"The first time I had contact with Jehovah's Witnesses was 15 years ago in Tiranë, Albania. I was surprised that a Witness had the courage to approach us, because we were a gang of ten youngsters. Nobody dared to talk to us, yet that brother did so despite our weapons. He fearlessly spoke to us about the Bible. His courage impressed me a lot.

"Four years ago here in Spain, a Witness visited me in prison and offered me a Bible study. I accepted, and since then I have changed for the better. I am no longer

a violent, aggressive man. It's been years since I last got into trouble. I have come to know Jehovah, and this has given purpose to my life. I try to live in peace with people around me, and I have been serving as an unbaptized publisher for over a year.

"Although I have been in prison for 12 years now, during the past 4 years, I have experienced happiness and peace of mind that I never felt before. I thank Jehovah for this every day.

"Some weeks ago I watched some videos on jw.org. The video about a brother who had been in prison in the United States really moved me. I am not an emotional man, but when I saw the changes he had made in his life, I could not hold back my tears.

"May Jehovah keep on blessing your efforts to reach all sorts of people by translating the good news into so many languages and also by visiting those of us who are in penitentiaries.

"Thank you very much."

Spain: A prisoner could not hold back his tears when he watched the jw.org video *From Prison to Prosperity*

"I Have Finally Found Peace of Mind"

"I always felt an emptiness in my life and drifted along, continually searching for an inner peace that seemed to elude me," says Felicity, who is 68 and lives in **Sweden.** Not satisfied with her Catholic beliefs, she began investigating a wide variety of religious ideas and ended up becoming seriously involved in witchcraft and divination.

Having found no true meaning in life, she felt so despondent that she considered taking her own life. "With tears streaming down my face, I called out loudly to God, asking him to tell me what he wanted me to do. Two weeks later, there was a gentle knock on my door. A smiling young man asked me if I was interested in listening to God's Word. I thought to myself, 'Oh no, God, this is not what I meant—not Jehovah's Witnesses!' "

Although her immediate inclination was to close the door, she decided to listen and accepted a Bible study in the *Bible Teach* book. "I was shown the Bible from a new angle," she says. Felicity got baptized at a regional convention in Sweden in 2014. She now says: "This is what I had searched for all my life. I have finally found peace of mind."

Oceania

LANDS
29

POPULATION
40,642,855

PUBLISHERS
98,353

BIBLE STUDIES
66,022

The Courage to Share

Emily, 12 years old, lives in **Australia.** One day her schoolteacher talked to her class about the importance of choosing good friends. This prompted Emily to show her teacher the whiteboard animation video *What's a Real Friend?* When the teacher later showed the video to the class, the students paid rapt attention. Afterward, they spent an hour discussing it. The

teacher also showed the video to several other classes. Emily then introduced her teacher and classmates to jw.org. "Jehovah gave me the courage to share the website with hundreds of students," says Emily. "He really blessed me."

A Trade Fair in a Remote Location

Five publishers traveled nine hours over rough mountain roads to set up a literature stand at a trade fair in Suai, **Timor-Leste**. Visitors to the stand were astonished to see Bible literature in 12 local languages, since most of those languages have little or no reading material published in them. One woman saw the title of a brochure and exclaimed, "That's my language!" It was the first time she had read any printed literature in her mother tongue, Bunak. In just four days, the publishers distributed 4,571 pieces of literature and received numerous requests to visit people at their homes. Most interested ones had never met Jehovah's Witnesses before. Children sat for hours watching videos from the series *Become Jehovah's Friend* in the Tetun Dili language. Some children even memorized the words of the songs in this series and sang them happily.

Timor-Leste: Children enjoy watching videos from the series *Become Jehovah's Friend*

“Just What the Students Needed”

Missionaries Brian and Roxanne requested permission to set up a literature cart at the college on the island of **Palau.** They met with the college president and showed him a video on jw.org about our public witnessing. They also left samples of the literature that they planned to display on the cart. The president told Brian and Roxanne that they needed to meet with

the director of student relations. After that meeting, they were told to have yet another meeting, this time with the dean of the college.

"We had a good discussion with the dean," Brian said, "but he referred us back to the president's office, where we were instructed to write a letter requesting permission to set up our literature cart. We seemed to be getting the runaround and were a bit discouraged, but we wrote the letter anyway."

To follow up on their letter, Brian and Roxanne visited the dean a second time, fully expecting him to

Palau: Roxanne and Brian had many good conversations with students when they set up a literature cart near a college campus

deny their request. "We were very surprised," Brian relates, "when the dean said that he had read the books we provided and thought they were excellent. He said that they were just what the students needed." Yes, permission was granted!

Brian continues: "Then the director of student relations informed us that students who live in dormitories could be driven to the church of their choice on Sundays. 'If they want to go to your church,' he said, 'we can take them there.' Roxanne and I were stunned. Instead of denying our request, the college was offering to take students to the Kingdom Hall!"

The first day Brian and Roxanne set up a literature cart on campus, they placed 65 books, 8 magazines, and 11 brochures. They also had many good conversations with the students. Both the dean and the director of student relations encouraged them to return.

Shoppers See Our Videos

Lipson, a Bethel family member, was returning to the **Solomon Islands** branch after a morning of preaching. As he walked along, he heard a Kingdom song coming from inside a store. Curious, he decided to go inside. To his surprise, he saw a crowd of both children and adults looking at a television that was playing the video of song number 55, "Life Without End—At Last!," from the *Become Jehovah's Friend* series. When the song finished playing, the store owner told the group, "I have another video I want you to see." He then played the animated video *Stealing Is Bad*. After this video ended, he admonished all not to steal from his store.

Because many others had come into the store while the video was playing, the store owner said to them, "I want you all to hear my favorite song." He then played song number 55 again. Next, the store owner decided to show the videos *Why Study the Bible?* and *What Happens at a Bible Study?* in Solomon Islands Pidgin.

Few Solomon Islanders have Internet access because of its high cost and limited availability. However, this store owner, who is not one of Jehovah's Witnesses, is helping to plant seeds of truth by showing our videos to those who come into his store.

She Found God's Name in the Book

Each Monday, a young couple enjoy using a mobile literature cart in an area of Nouméa, the capital of **New Caledonia.** One day, a woman shyly approached the

Solomon Islands: A store owner enjoys showing videos from jw.org to shoppers

cart and without a word took the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* Half an hour later, she returned, book in hand. She said to the couple, "Have you seen this?" She opened the book and pointed out Jehovah's name. "That's God's name!" she said. "I have been doing research for weeks at the library to grasp the truth about God. But then I took your book and got in my car. When I opened the book, the first thing I saw was God's name, Jehovah. I thought I ought to come back and thank you." The couple had a pleasant discussion with this woman and directed her to the entry "The Divine Name—Its Use and Its Meaning" in the appendix of the *Bible Teach* book. The woman explained that she wanted to pursue her research at the library first, but she now knows where the cart is every Monday!

Indonesia

THIS is a stirring account about humble Christian men and women who courageously stood firm through political upheavals, religious conflicts, and a clergy-inspired ban that lasted 25 years. Learn about a brother whose name was on a Communist death list and about a former crime boss who became a mature Christian. Read the heartwarming story of two deaf girls who became friends and then discovered that they were siblings. And learn how Jehovah's people are successfully sharing the good news with the world's largest Muslim population.

An Overview of Indonesia

Land Straddling the equator between Australia and continental Asia, Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago. Most of its more than 17,500 islands feature rugged mountains and dense tropical forests. With more than 100 active volcanoes, it is also the most active volcanic region on earth.

People Indonesia has the fourth largest population in the world (after China, India, and the United States) and is home to more than 300 ethnic groups. The Javanese and Sundanese ethnic groups make up more than half the population.

LAND (square miles)	737,815
POPULATION	256,000,000
PUBLISHERS IN 2015	26,246
RATIO, 1 PUBLISHER TO	9,754
MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE IN 2015	55,864

Religion About 90 percent of Indonesians are Muslims. The rest are mostly Hindus, Buddhists, or nominal Christians. Many people also follow traditional indigenous religious customs.

Language More than 700 languages are spoken throughout the archipelago. The national lingua franca is Indonesian, derived from Malay. Most people also speak a regional language at home.

Livelihood Many people are small-scale farmers or traders. The country has rich deposits of minerals, timber, crude oil, and natural gas and is a major supplier of rubber and palm oil.

Food Rice is the staple. Popular meals include *nasi goréng* (fried rice and egg with vegetables), *satay* (barbecued meat skewers), and *gado-gado* (salad with peanut sauce).

Climate Hot and humid. Monsoon winds produce two seasons—wet and dry. Thunderstorms are common.

The Spice Trade

DURING the 16th century, the spice trade powered the global economy much as the trade of crude oil does today. Spices such as nutmeg and cloves, which came from the famed Spice Islands (now the provinces of Maluku and North Maluku in Indonesia), fetched fabulous prices in Europe.

Explorers Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Ferdinand Magellan, Samuel de Champlain, and Henry Hudson all sought routes to the Spice Islands. The search for Indonesian spices thus gave humans their first comprehensive understanding of the geography of the planet.

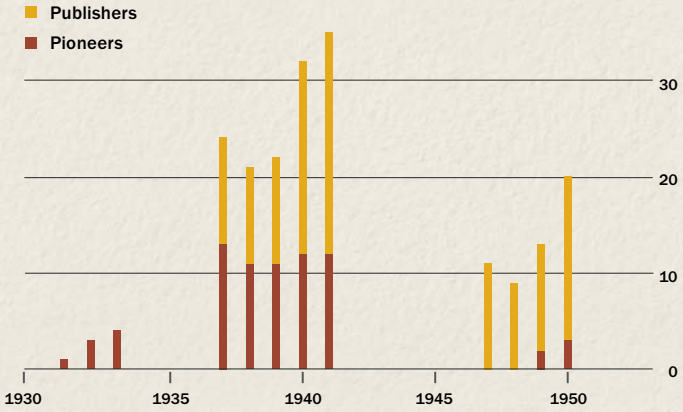
Cloves

Nutmeg

1931 to 1950

“The Day of Small Beginnings.”

—Zech. 4:10.



"That Is Where I Want to Start!"

Alexander MacGillivray, the branch servant in Australia, paced about his office deep in thought. For several days he had been wrestling with a problem, and he had finally come up with a solution. Now he needed to talk to Frank Rice.

Frank, a hardy 28-year-old colporteur (pioneer), had arrived at the branch office a few weeks earlier. He had learned the truth as a teenager and started in the colporteur work soon afterward. He then spent over ten years preaching throughout much of Australia, traveling by horseback, bicycle, motorcycle, and motorized caravan. After stopping briefly at Bethel, Frank was now ready to tackle his next territory assignment.

Calling Frank into his office, Brother MacGillivray pointed to a map of the islands north of Australia. "Frank, how would you like to open up the preaching work here?" he asked. "There is not one brother in all these islands!"

Frank's eyes were drawn to a string of islands that gleamed like pearls in the Indian Ocean—the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia).* On those islands lived millions of people who had not yet heard the good news of God's Kingdom. Pointing to the capital, Batavia (now Jakarta), Frank said, "That is where I want to start!"

* Also formerly called the Dutch East Indies. The Dutch arrived some 300 years earlier and established a colonial empire based on the lucrative spice trade. Throughout this account, we will use modern place-names.

Preaching in Java

In 1931, Frank Rice arrived in Jakarta, a large, bustling city on the island of Java. He rented a room near the center of the city and filled it with cartons of Bible literature, astonishing his landlady.

"At first I felt rather lost and homesick," recalled Frank. "People strolled around in white drill suits and pith helmets, while I sweltered in my heavy Australian clothes. I spoke not a word of Dutch or Indonesian. After praying to Jehovah for guidance, I decided that there must be people in the business district who spoke

Frank Rice and Clem Deschamp in Jakarta

English. That is where I started preaching—and what a fruitful field it proved to be!"

Since most Jakarta residents spoke Dutch, Frank studied hard to get a working knowledge of the language and soon began preaching from house to house. He also tackled Indonesian and gradually learned that language too. "The problem was that I had no Indonesian literature," said Frank. "Then Jehovah guided me to an Indonesian schoolteacher who became interested in the truth and agreed to translate the booklet *Where Are the Dead?* More booklets followed, and soon many Indonesian-speaking people became interested in the truth."

In November 1931, two more pioneers from Australia arrived in Jakarta, Clem Deschamp, aged 25, and 19-year-old Bill Hunter. Clem and Bill had brought along a pioneer home on wheels—a house car, or motorized caravan—one of the first to arrive in Indonesia. After they learned a few Dutch phrases, they set off on a preaching tour covering the major cities in Java.

Following in Clem and Bill's tire tracks was Charles Harris, another hardy Australian pioneer. Starting in 1935, Charles covered most of Java by house car and bicycle, placing literature in five languages: Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, English, and Indonesian. Some years he placed about 17,000 pieces of literature.

The amount of literature that Charles distributed made many people sit up and take notice. One official in Jakarta asked Clem Deschamp, "How many people do you have working down there in East Java?"

"Only one," replied Brother Deschamp.

Kingdom preachers next to a pioneer motor home, 1938 ▶

◀ Josephine Tan, a pioneer sister

Bottom right: Charles Harris witnessed using a bicycle and a house car

▼ Semarang Congregation, 1940

“Do you expect me to believe that?” barked the official. “You must have quite an army of workers down there, judging by the amount of your literature being distributed everywhere!”

The early pioneers kept constantly on the move in order to reach as many people as possible. “We worked through the island from end to end, seldom speaking to anyone twice,” said Bill Hunter. Along the way they sowed vast quantities of spiritual seed that later yielded a rich spiritual harvest.—Eccl. 11:6; 1 Cor. 3:6.

Charles Harris and Bill Hunter in Surabaya, East Java, 1935

Sumatra Hears the Good News

About 1936, the pioneers in Java discussed how to expand the work to Sumatra—the sixth-largest island in the world. This rugged island spans the equator and contains large cities and plantations along with extensive swamps and rainforests.

The pioneers agreed to send Frank Rice, so they pooled their meager funds to pay his fare. Soon afterward, Frank arrived in Medan, North Sumatra, with his two witnessing bags, 40 cartons of literature, and a little money in his pocket. Frank was a man of strong faith. He immediately set to work, confident that Jehovah would provide what he needed to carry out his assignment.—Matt. 6:33.

During his last week of preaching in Medan, Frank met a friendly Dutchman who invited him in for coffee. Frank told the man that he needed a car to preach the good news throughout the island. Pointing to a broken down car in his garden, the man said, "If you can fix it, you can have it for 100 guilders."*

"I don't have 100 guilders," Frank replied.

The man fixed his gaze on Frank. "Do you really want to preach to the whole of Sumatra?" he probed.

"Yes," answered Frank.

"Well then, if you can fix the car, you can take it," said the Dutchman. "If you get the money, you can pay me later."

Frank set to work on the car and soon had it running smoothly. He later wrote, "With a car full of literature, a tank full of petrol, and a heart full of faith, I headed off to preach to the people of Sumatra."

* The equivalent of about $1,100 (U.S.) today.

One year later, having covered the island from top to bottom, Frank returned to Jakarta. There he sold the car for 100 guilders and mailed the money to the Dutchman in Medan.

A few weeks later, Frank received a letter from Australia directing him to a new pioneer assignment. Immediately, he packed his bags and headed off to open up the work in Indochina (now Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam).

Henry Cockman with Jean and Clem Deschamp in Sumatra, 1940

Early Preaching Methods

Radio Broadcasts

IN 1933, the brothers arranged for a radio station in Jakarta to broadcast English recordings of Brother Rutherford's radio lectures. Additional lectures in Dutch were read over the airwaves by a man who was interested in the truth. The broadcasts aroused a great deal of interest and helped the brothers to place more literature in the field.

When the radio station aired Brother Rutherford's forceful lecture "Effect of Holy Year on Peace and Prosperity," the Catholic clergy had had enough.* Working through their minions, they had Brother De Schumaker, who had supplied the recording, charged with "slander, ridicule, and animosity." Brother De Schumaker vigorously defended the charges but was fined 25 guilders# and court costs. Three major newspapers reported on the trial, resulting in an even greater witness being given.

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* Brother Rutherford's lecture exposed the corrupt spiritual, political, and commercial dealings of the Roman Catholic Church.

The equivalent of about $300 (U.S.) today.

The *Lightbearer*

On July 15, 1935, the Watch Tower Society's 52-foot ketch *Lightbearer* arrived in Jakarta after a six-month voyage from Sydney, Australia. Aboard were seven zealous pioneers who were determined to spread the good news throughout Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia.

Crew members on the *Lightbearer*

For more than two years, the pioneers on the *Lightbearer* visited large and small ports throughout Indonesia, distributing vast quantities of Bible literature. As the vessel entered each small port, "the crew would turn on the transcription machine and play one of the lectures of J. F. Rutherford, then president of the Watch Tower Society," related Jean Deschamp. "Imagine the surprise of isolated Malay villagers on seeing a large yacht arriving in their port and hearing such a loud, powerful voice coming through the air. A flying saucer could hardly have aroused more interest."

Enraged by the brothers' bold witnessing, the clergy eventually pressured the authorities to ban the *Lightbearer* from entering many Indonesian ports. In December 1937, the *Lightbearer* returned to Australia, leaving behind an outstanding record of missionary activity in Indonesia.

The Bibelkring

DURING the late 1930's, a new religious movement called the Bibelkring (a Dutch name meaning "a group of Bible students") emerged around Lake Toba in North Sumatra. The movement started after several schoolteachers accepted literature from a visiting pioneer, likely Eric Ewins, who had preached in the Lake Toba area in 1936. What the teachers read prompted them to leave the Batak Protestant Church and establish home Bible study groups. Those groups grew and spread until their members totaled into the hundreds.*

Drawing on the literature left by the pioneer, the early Bibelkring identified several Bible truths. "They refused to salute the flag and shunned Christmas and birthday celebrations. Some even preached from door to door," said Dame Simbolon, a former member who accepted the truth in 1972. Yet, lacking support from God's organization, the movement soon fell victim to human reasoning. "Women were not allowed to wear makeup, jewelry, modern dress, or even shoes," explains Limeria Nadap-Dap, another former member who is now our spiritual sister. "Members were also forbidden to obtain a national identity card, a stand that incurred the wrath of the government."

Former Bibelkring member Limeria Nadap-Dap is now our Christian sister

The Bibelkring movement eventually split into several factions and gradually declined. When pioneers later returned to the Lake Toba area, many former Bibelkring members accepted the truth.

* Some sources estimate that at its peak the Bibelkring had thousands of members.

Thio Seng Bie

BORN 1906

BAPTIZED 1937

PROFILE A faithful elder who endured racial violence. —As told by his daughter Thio Sioe Nio.

He Treasured Spiritual Riches

IN May 1963, anti-Chinese riots erupted throughout West Java. The city hardest hit was Sukabumi, where our family ran a trucking business. Hundreds of crazed people—including some of our neighbors—smashed their way into our home. We huddled in terror while the rioters smashed and looted our possessions.

When the mob left, other neighbors came to comfort us. My father sat with them on the living-room floor. There among our shattered possessions, he found his big Sundanese Bible. He opened it and told our neighbors that these troubles had been foretold. He then explained the joyful Kingdom hope.

My father never focused on storing up earthly treasures. He often reminded us: “Spiritual things must come first!” Thanks to his zealous example, his wife, six children, 90-year-old father, and many relatives and neighbors accepted the truth.

Theodorus Ratu

West Java Bears Fruit

In 1933, Frank Rice invited Theodorus (Theo) Ratu, a native of North Sulawesi, to help him operate the Jakarta literature depot. "I became very interested in the noble Kingdom work and started to preach along with Brother Rice," recalled Theo. "Later, I joined Bill Hunter on a preaching tour of Java and the crew of the *Lightbearer* on a voyage to Sumatra." Theo was the first Indonesian to accept the truth, and he pioneered for decades in Java, North Sulawesi, and Sumatra.

The following year, Bill Hunter placed a copy of the booklet *Where Are the Dead?* with Felix Tan, a student living in Jakarta. Felix returned to his family in Bandung, West Java, and showed the booklet to his younger brother, Dodo. Both were amazed to learn from the booklet that the first man, Adam, did not *have* an immortal soul. Adam *was* a soul. (Gen. 2:7, ftn.) With their spiritual appetites aroused, Felix and Dodo scoured the secondhand bookstores in Bandung for more Watch

Tower publications. They also shared what they had learned with their family. After devouring all the books and booklets they could find, they wrote to the literature depot in Jakarta. To their surprise, they received an encouraging visit from Frank Rice, who brought them new literature.

Soon after Brother Rice returned to Jakarta, newlyweds Clem and Jean Deschamp visited Bandung for 15 days. "Brother Deschamp asked our family if we would like to be baptized," related Felix. "Four members of my family—Dodo, my younger sister Josephine (Pin Nio), my mother (Kang Nio), and I—symbolized our dedication to Jehovah."* After they were baptized,

* Later, Felix's father and three younger brothers also became Witnesses. His sister, Josephine, married André Elias and attended the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. Her life story was published in the September 2009 issue of *Awake!*

The Tan Family

the Tan family joined Clem and Jean in a nine-day preaching campaign. Clem showed them how to preach using a testimony card that contained a simple Bible message in three languages. Soon the small group in Bandung became a congregation, the second in Indonesia.

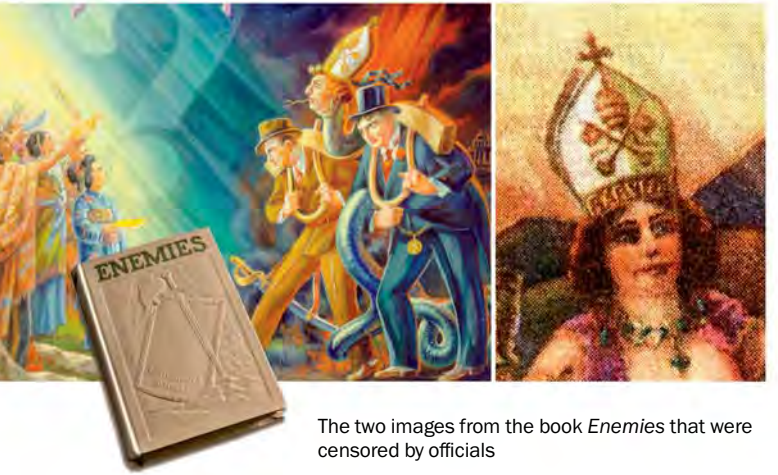
The Pope's Hat

As the preaching work gained momentum, the clergy of Christendom stirred from their slumber. They and their agents wrote articles in the press attacking the beliefs and the work of the Witnesses. The articles prompted officials at the Department of Religious Affairs to summon Frank Rice for questioning. Satisfied by his answers, the officials allowed the work to continue unhindered.*

During the early 1930's, most colonial officials ignored or tolerated the preaching work. But when Nazi Germany rose to power in Europe, some bureaucrats changed their tune, especially those who were ardent Catholics. "One Catholic customs official impounded a shipment of our books on the pretext that they contained unfavorable references to Nazism," recalled Clem Deschamp. "When I called at the Customs Department to complain, the hostile official was on vacation. His replacement—a friendly non-Catholic man—promptly released the books, saying, 'Take all you can while the regular man is away!' "

"On another occasion, officials insisted that we censor two pictures in the book *Enemies,"* said Jean Deschamp. "They objected to caricatures of a writhing serpent (Satan) and a drunken harlot (false religion). Both were

* After World War II, Frank returned to Australia and raised a family. Brother Rice finished his earthly course in 1986.



The two images from the book *Enemies* that were censored by officials

wearing the papal hat (miter).* We were determined to distribute the book. So three of us sat at the wharf in the stifling heat, plowing through thousands of books to black out pictures of the pope's hat!"

As Europe edged toward war, our publications fearlessly continued to expose Christendom's hypocrisy and political meddling. In turn, the clergy ratcheted up pressure on the authorities to restrict our work, and several of our publications were banned.

However, the brothers were determined to move ahead with the work, and they made good use of a printing press they received from Australia. (Acts 4:20) Describing one of their strategies, Jean Deschamp related: "Whenever we printed a new booklet or magazine, we had to submit a copy to the authorities for approval.

* The pictures were based on Revelation 12:9 and 17:3-6.

We printed and distributed the publication early in the week. Then, at the end of the week, we took a copy to the attorney general's office. When the publication was rejected, we shook our heads sadly and then hurried back to the printery to print the next publication."

Brothers and sisters who distributed banned publications often played a game of cat and mouse with the police. For example, while witnessing in Kediri, East Java, Charles Harris unwittingly called on the local police inspector.

"I've been searching for you all day," said the inspector. "Wait while I get my list of your banned books."

"While the inspector rummaged inside his home," says Charles, "I stashed the banned literature in hidden pockets in my coat. When he returned, I gave him 15 booklets that were not banned. He reluctantly gave me his contribution, and then I placed the banned literature further down the street."

Printing Under Pressure

When World War II engulfed Europe, literature shipments from the Netherlands to Indonesia dried up. However, the brothers had seen trouble coming and prudently arranged for a commercial company to print the magazines in Jakarta. The first issue of *Consolation* (now *Awake!*) in Indonesian appeared in January 1939, and *The Watchtower* in Indonesian was released soon afterward. The brothers then bought a small press and began printing the magazines themselves. In 1940, they received a larger flatbed press from Australia with which they printed booklets and magazines in Indonesian and in Dutch, covering the expenses out of their own pockets.

The first printing equipment arrives at the Jakarta depot

Finally, on July 28, 1941, the authorities banned all of the Watch Tower Society's publications. Jean Deschamp recalled: "I was typing in the office one morning when the doors flung open and in marched three policemen and a senior Dutch official in full regalia—medals, white gloves, dress sword, and plumed hat. We were not surprised. Three days earlier we had received inside information that our publications would soon be banned. The pompous official read a lengthy proclamation and then demanded to be taken to the printery to seal our press. But my husband told him that he was too late. The press had been sold the day before!"

The Bible, however, had not been banned. So the brothers kept preaching from house to house, using only the Bible. They also conducted Bible studies. But since the prospect of war loomed in Asia, the foreign pioneers were directed to return to Australia.

Under the Japanese Yoke

In early 1942, the Japanese military juggernaut swept through Indonesia, seizing it with a viselike grip. Many brothers were forced to do hard manual labor—building roads or clearing ditches. Others were interned in squalid prison camps and tortured for refusing to support the war. At least three brothers died in prison.

One Dutch sister, Johanna Harp, who lived in a remote mountain village in East Java, was able to avoid the camps for the first two years of the war. She and

Johanna Harp, her two daughters, and Beth Godenze, a family friend (center)

her three teenage children used their freedom to translate the book *Salvation* and issues of *The Watchtower* from English into Dutch.* The translated publications were then copied and smuggled to Witnesses throughout Java.

The few Witnesses who still had their freedom met in small groups and preached cautiously. "I was always on the lookout to talk informally about the truth," said Josephine Elias (formerly Tan). "I carried a chessboard when visiting interested people at their homes so that others would think I was merely playing chess." Felix Tan and his wife, Bola, preached from door to door, pretending to sell soap. "We were often followed by spies of the *Kempeitai*, the dreaded Japanese military police," said Felix. "To avoid suspicion, we visited our Bible students at varying times. Six of our students progressed very well and were baptized during the war."

Dissent in Jakarta

As the brothers adjusted to the wartime hardships, they soon faced another serious test. The Japanese authorities ordered all foreigners (including Chinese-Indonesians) to register and to carry an identity card bearing an oath of allegiance to the Japanese Empire. Many brothers wondered, 'Should we register and sign the identity card, or should we refuse?'

Felix Tan explained: "The brothers in Jakarta urged those of us in Sukabumi to refuse to sign the identity card. But we asked the authorities if we could change the wording on the card from 'the undersigned have

* Sister Harp's youngest daughter, Hermine (Mimi), attended Gilead school after the war and returned to Indonesia as a missionary.

Josephine Elias with her brother Felix

sworn allegiance to' to 'the undersigned will not impede' the Japanese army. Surprisingly, they agreed, so we all obtained cards. When the brothers in Jakarta heard about our decision, they called us apostates and cut us off."

Sadly, most of the hard-liners in Jakarta were arrested and renounced the truth. One brother who refused to compromise ended up in prison with André Elias. "I reasoned with him on the registration issue and helped him to get a more balanced view," said André. "He humbly asked forgiveness for cutting us off. We then had a grand time building each other up, but tragically, he died because of the harsh prison conditions."

Merdeka!

When the war ended in 1945, the brothers and sisters were eager to press on with the preaching work. One brother who had been imprisoned and tortured wrote to the branch office in Australia: "Here I am

again after four long weary years, unbroken and still of the same mind. During all my troubles, I never forgot about the brothers. Can you please send me some books?"

The longed-for literature soon arrived in the country, a trickle at first but then larger shipments. A group of ten publishers in Jakarta resumed translating publications into Indonesian.

On August 17, 1945, the leaders of Indonesia's independence movement proclaimed Indonesia an independent republic, triggering a four-year revolution against Dutch colonial rule. Tens of thousands of people died in the ensuing chaos, and more than seven million people were displaced.

Throughout the revolution the brothers kept preaching from house to house. "Patriots tried to force us to shout their war cry *'Merdeka,'* meaning 'Freedom,'" said Josephine Elias. "But we told them we were neutral in such political affairs." In 1949, the Dutch handed over sovereignty of their longtime colony to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (now the Republic of Indonesia).*

By 1950, the brothers in Indonesia had endured nearly ten years of conflict. But a huge work lay ahead of them. How could they spread the good news to Indonesia's teeming millions? From a human standpoint, the task seemed impossible! Yet, in full faith the brothers pressed ahead, confident that Jehovah would "send out workers into his harvest." (Matt. 9: 38) And that is what Jehovah did.

* The Dutch continued to administer West Papua (then West New Guinea) until 1962.

André Elias

BORN 1915

BAPTIZED 1940

PROFILE A courageous pioneer who repeatedly stood firm under interrogation and threats.

A Fearless Pioneer

DURING World War II, Brother Elias and his wife, Josephine, appeared before officials in Sukabumi, West Java, at the headquarters of the dreaded *Kempeitai*, the Japanese military police. André was interrogated first. Questions rained down on him like hammer blows. “Who are Jehovah’s Witnesses? Do you oppose the Japanese government? Are you a spy?”

“We are servants of Almighty God and have done nothing wrong,” replied André. The commanding officer grabbed a samurai sword from the wall and held it aloft.

“What if I kill you now?” he snarled. André placed his head on the office desk and silently prayed. After a long pause, laughter erupted. “You are brave!” said the officer. He then summoned Josephine. When her testimo-

ny agreed with André's, the officer barked: "You are not spies. Get out of here!"

Several months later, André was denounced by "false brothers" and imprisoned. (2 Cor. 11:26) For several months, he survived by eating food scraps scavenged from the cell gutter. Still, the jailers could not break his integrity. When Josephine was able to visit him, he whispered to her through the prison bars: "Do not worry. Whether they kill me or set me free, I will remain faithful to Jehovah. They can carry me out as a corpse but not as a traitor."

After six months in jail, André defended himself before the Jakarta High Court and was released.

Some 30 years later, when the Indonesian government banned Jehovah's Witnesses again, the district attorney in Manado, North Sulawesi, summoned André to his office. "Do you know that Jehovah's Witnesses are banned?" he asked.

"Yes," replied André.

"Are you now prepared to change your religion?" asked the official.

André leaned forward and dramatically beat his chest. "You can tear my heart from my body, but you can never make me change my religion," he boomed.

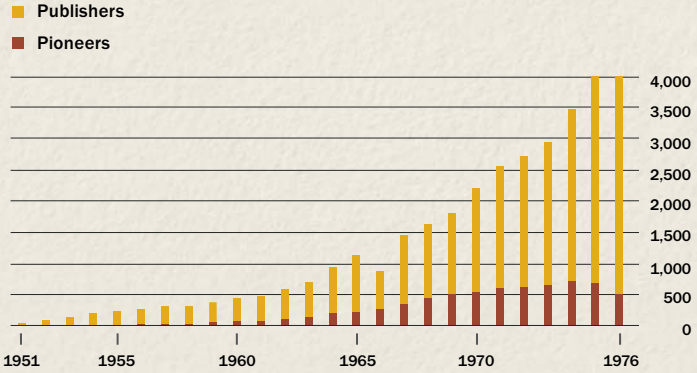
The district attorney dismissed André and never bothered him again.

In 2000, André died at the age of 85, after some 60 years of zealous pioneer service.

1951 to 1976

“The Word of Jehovah Went On Growing and Spreading.”

—Acts 12:24.



Gilead Missionaries Arrive

In July 1951, the small congregation in Jakarta gathered together to welcome Peter Vanderhaegen, the first Gilead-trained missionary to enter Indonesia. By year's end, another 13 missionaries had arrived from Australia, Germany, and the Netherlands, nearly doubling the number of publishers in the country.

"I had visions of going from house to house using gestures to communicate," recalled Fredrika Renskers, a Dutch missionary. "But since so many people spoke Dutch, I mostly preached in that language at first." Ronald Jacka, from Australia, related: "Some of us used a testimony card with a short printed sermon in Indonesian. I looked at the card before knocking on each door and tried to recite the words from memory."

With the missionaries taking a strong lead, the number of publishers quickly grew from 34 to 91 in just one year. On September 1, 1951, a branch office of the Watch Tower Society was established at André Elias' home in Central Jakarta. Ronald Jacka was assigned as branch servant.

Other Areas Open Up

In November 1951, Peter Vanderhaegen was assigned to Manado, North Sulawesi, where Theo Ratu and his wife had established a small group. Most of the locals were professed Christians and showed great respect for God's Word. Many householders invited the Witnesses in and asked them to explain Bible doctrines. They

often spoke to groups of ten people. Fifteen minutes later, about 50 people would be listening. Within the hour, the discussion would move to the front yard and up to 200 people would join in.

Early in 1952, Albert and Jean Maltby established a missionary home in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia's second-largest city. There they were joined by six missionary sisters—Gertrud Ott, Fredrika Renskers, Susie and Marian Stoove, Eveline Platte, and Mimi Harp. "Most local people were moderate Muslims and were

Missionary home in Jakarta

very friendly," says Fredrika Renskers. "Many people seemed to be just waiting for the truth, so it was easy to start Bible studies. Within three years, the Surabaya Congregation had 75 publishers."

About that time, a Muslim man named Azis from Padang, West Sumatra, wrote to the branch office requesting spiritual help. Azis had studied with Australian pioneers during the 1930's but had lost contact with them during the Japanese occupation. Then he stumbled across a booklet that was published by Jehovah's Witnesses. He wrote: "When I saw the Jakarta address on the booklet, it renewed my spirit!" The branch office quickly dispatched circuit overseer Frans van Vliet to Padang. He discovered that Azis had talked to his neighbor, Nazar Ris, a spiritually hungry civil servant. Both men and their families accepted the truth. Brother Azis became a faithful elder. Nazar Ris became a special pioneer, and many of his children are zealous Witnesses today.

Soon afterward, Frans van Vliet visited an inactive Dutch brother who was rebuilding a war-damaged oil refinery in Balikpapan, East Kalimantan. Frans accompanied the brother in service and encouraged him to study with several interested people. Before the brother returned to the Netherlands, he had established a small group in Balikpapan.

Later, a newly baptized sister, Titi Koetin, moved to Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. Titi preached to her relatives in the Dayak community, helping many of them learn the truth. Some of those new ones returned to their villages deep in Kalimantan and established groups that grew into strong congregations.

Frans van Vliet and his younger sister Nel

Producing Indonesian Literature

As the preaching work spread rapidly, the brothers needed even more literature in Indonesian. In 1951, the book *"Let God Be True"* was translated into Indonesian, but the authorities revised the Indonesian spelling system, making it necessary for the branch to revise the translation.* When the book was finally released, it stirred much interest among Indonesian readers.

In 1953, the branch office printed 250 copies of *The Watchtower* in Indonesian—the first local edition to appear in 12 years. The 12-page mimeographed magazine contained only study articles at first. Three years later, it was increased to 16 pages, and a commercial firm was printing 10,000 copies a month.

The monthly edition of *Awake!* in Indonesian was introduced in 1957. It rapidly reached a circulation of 10,000 copies. Because of a nationwide shortage of printing paper, the brothers needed to apply for a

* There have been two major revisions of the Indonesian spelling system since 1945, mostly to replace the former Dutch spelling system.

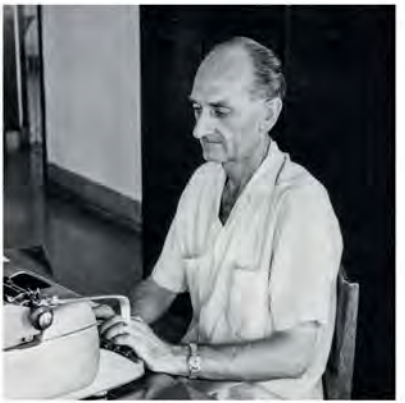
paper license. The government official who handled their application told them: "I consider the *Menara Pengawal* (*Watchtower*) one of the best magazines in Indonesia and I am only too glad to help with the paper license for your new magazine."

The Work Expands East

In 1953, Peter Vanderhaegen was assigned to the circuit work in Indonesia. His circuit included the whole country and stretched some 3,200 miles from east to west and 1,100 miles from north to south. To cover this vast area, he often had many hair-raising experiences.

In 1954, Brother Vanderhaegen traveled to the eastern region of Indonesia, a religiously diverse area including the islands of Bali, which has a large Hindu population; Lombok and Sumbawa, with a predominantly Muslim population; Flores, which is mainly Catholic; and Sumba, Alor, and Timor, which are mostly Protestant. Traveling by rickety boat, he preached briefly at several islands along the way before arriving

Peter Vanderhaegen



at Kupang, the capital of Timor. "I preached in Timor for two weeks," Brother Vanderhaegen related. "Despite heavy rain, I placed all of my literature, obtained 34 magazine subscriptions, and started several Bible studies." Special pioneers followed up on this interest and established a congregation in Kupang. From there the good news spread to the neighboring islands of Rotè, Alor, Sumba, and Flores.

When the Protestant clergy in Kupang saw that their flocks were listening to Jehovah's Witnesses, they became filled with jealous rage. One senior clergyman ordered Thomas Tubulau, an elderly one-handed tinsmith, to stop studying with the Witnesses, adding that if he did not stop telling others what he had learned, blood would be shed. Thomas boldly replied: "No Christian would say what you just said. You will not see me at your church again." Thomas became a zealous Kingdom proclaimer, and his daughter became a special pioneer.

Nevertheless, Timor's clergy were determined to stamp out Jehovah's Witnesses. In 1961, they successfully pressured the Department of Religious Affairs and the local military authorities to ban the house-to-house preaching work. So, the brothers simply adjusted their witnessing methods. They spoke to people at markets and wells, to fishermen bringing in their catch at the beach, and to families tending graves at cemeteries. After one month, the military authorities relented and announced over the radio that there was freedom of religion in Timor. When the Department of Religious Affairs insisted that house-to-house preaching was still forbidden, the brothers asked them to put

their statement in writing. The officials refused. After that, the brothers resumed their house-to-house work unhindered.

When missionaries Piet and Nell de Jager and Hans and Susie van Vuure arrived in Papua in 1962, they too were opposed by Christendom's clergy. Three senior ministers confronted the missionaries and demanded that they preach elsewhere. From the pulpit, in print, and over the radio, the clergy falsely accused Jehovah's Witnesses of stirring up trouble against the government. They also cajoled, threatened, or bribed any parishioner who started studying with the missionaries. And they pressured local community chieftains to oppose the preaching work.

These efforts backfired when one chief invited the missionaries to speak at his village. "After the chief assembled the villagers, Piet and I gave two short talks explaining our work," recalled Hans. "Then our wives demonstrated how we would knock at their doors, accept their invitation to step inside, and share a short message from the Bible. The chief and his people responded favorably to our presentation and allowed us to carry on our work freely."

These and other incidents followed a familiar pattern. Rarely did Muslims oppose the preaching work; invariably the opposition came from Christendom's clergy. This pattern continues to the present day.

"Brought Before Governors . . . for a Witness"

Jesus told his disciples: "You will be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a witness to them and the nations." (Matt. 10:18) These words have repeatedly proved true in Indonesia.

In 1960, a prominent Dutch theologian in Jakarta published a book that denounced Jehovah's Witnesses as false Christians. This book prompted many clergymen to take up the cudgel against the Witnesses. For example, the clergy in one town wrote to the Department of Religious Affairs accusing the Witnesses of "confusing their church members." When the officials invited the brothers to respond to the charges, they presented the facts and gave a good witness. One religious official counseled his colleague: "Let Jehovah's Witnesses alone. They are waking up the sleepy Protestants."

In 1964, a group of Protestant clergymen in Papua appealed to the Parliamentary Committee on Religious

Unloading a shipment of *Paradise* books, 1963

and Social Affairs to have the work of Jehovah's Witnesses banned. The branch office, in turn, requested to appear before the committee to make a defense. "We addressed the committee for nearly an hour and clearly explained our Bible education work," said Tagor Hutasoit. "One opposed politician—a Protestant—falsely accused us of provoking religious unrest in Papua. Most Muslim committee members, however, were sympathetic. They told us: 'The Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, so you have the right to preach.' " Following this meeting, a high-ranking government official in Papua declared: "The new government . . . maintains freedom of religion, and this also applies to newcomers in that field."

More Missionaries Arrive

On July 9, 1964, the Indonesian Department of Justice officially registered the Bible Students Association, a legal corporation used by Jehovah's Witnesses. But before the brothers could enjoy full religious freedom, they needed to be registered with the Department of Religious Affairs. This agency took advice from the Directorate General of Christian Community Guidance, which was staffed by hard-line Protestants who were implacably opposed to Jehovah's Witnesses.

One day a brother met a senior official who worked closely with the Minister of Religious Affairs. The two men discovered that they came from the same village, so they enjoyed an animated discussion in their native dialect. When the brother told the official about the problems that the Witnesses were having with the Directorate General of Christian Community Guidance,

the official arranged for three brothers to meet directly with the minister, a congenial and sympathetic Muslim. On May 11, 1968, the minister issued an official decree recognizing Jehovah's Witnesses as a religion and confirming their right to carry out their work in Indonesia.

The senior official also volunteered to bypass the Directorate General of Christian Community Guidance so that foreign Witnesses could obtain missionary visas. With the help of this fair-minded administrator, 64 missionaries were admitted to Indonesia over the next few years.

By 1968, about 300 missionaries and special pioneers and more than 1,200 publishers were carrying the good news to every corner of Indonesia. The missionaries gave valuable training to the local brothers. This helped speed up their spiritual progress. The training was timely because storm clouds of persecution were swiftly approaching.

A "Christmas Gift" for the Clergy

In 1974, the Directorate General of Christian Community Guidance resumed its long-running campaign to ban Jehovah's Witnesses. The director general of that department wrote to each regional office of the Department of Religious Affairs, falsely claiming that Jehovah's Witnesses were not legally recognized. He urged local officials to act against the Witnesses whenever they caused them "difficulties"—a thinly disguised invitation to persecute Jehovah's people. Most officials ignored the direction. But others seized the opportunity to ban the meetings and the house-to-house preaching.

Around the same time, the World Council of Churches (WCC) was planning to hold an international assembly in Jakarta, a move that local Muslims viewed as provocative and aggressive. Because religious tensions were escalating, the WCC canceled the assembly. However, Christian proselytizing had become a hot issue, and many politicians were nervous. Predictably, the clergy tried to blame Jehovah's Witnesses by loudly complaining about their preaching activities. This caused more officials to view the Witnesses in a negative light.

In December 1975, with religious tensions still increasing, Indonesia invaded East Timor (now Timor-Leste), a former Portuguese colony. Seven months later, East Timor was annexed, fueling patriotic fervor throughout the nation. The brothers remained politically neutral and refused to engage in military service or salute the flag, a stand that aroused the ire of senior military commanders. (Matt. 4:10; John 18:36) Moving in for the kill, the clergy clamored for the government to act against the Witnesses. Finally, in mid-December 1976, the clergy received their "Christmas gift"—the government announced that Jehovah's Witnesses were banned.

financed with funds obtained mostly from the public here.Lhl.

"Yehova Witness" Banned Here

KUPANG.— Minister of Religious Affairs HA Mukti Ali stated here this week that the Christian "Yehova Witness" sect has no legal right to exist in Indonesia and its teaching and expansion must be banned.

The minister stated this after attending a briefing given by East Nusatenggara Governor El Tari upon his arrival here for a three day visit to the province. He suggested the banned on the Yehova Witness sect should be implemented by each provincial administration through local high courts.

On December 24, 1976, a newspaper announced the ban on Jehovah's Witnesses

Titi Koetin

BORN 1928

BAPTIZED 1957

PROFILE A sister who tactfully helped her opposed husband learn the truth.—As told by her son, Mario Koetin.

A True Daughter of Sarah

MY MOTHER was a warmhearted, outgoing person who loved the Bible. When she met Gertrud Ott, a missionary in Manado, North Sulawesi, she readily agreed to a Bible study and came into the truth. But my father, Erwin, a prominent banker and later chairman of the Jakarta Stock Exchange, vigorously opposed her new faith.

One day, my father gave Mother an ultimatum.

"Your religion or your husband—you must choose!" he raged.

My mother thought long and hard. Then she gently replied, "I want both—my husband and Jehovah."

My father was speechless, and his anger evaporated.

In time, my father became more tolerant, for he loved my mother very much and greatly valued her wisdom and insight.

My mother, however, wanted her husband to join her in true worship. After praying earnestly about the matter, she remembered that my father loved to learn languages. So she decided to display Bible texts in English around the home. “I’m trying to improve my English,” she told him. Realizing that he valued public speaking, she also asked him to help her rehearse her Theocratic Ministry School talks. He agreed. Appreciating that he was hospitable, she asked if they could accommodate the visiting circuit overseer. He consented. And knowing that he cherished his family, she gently suggested that he might like to sit with us at Christian conventions. So he did.

My mother’s chaste, respectful, and deeply spiritual nature touched all who knew her

My mother’s patient and discreet efforts gradually softened my father’s heart. Later, when our family lived in England, he attended meetings and befriended John Barr, who became a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses. That same year, my father was baptized, bringing my mother unbridled joy. In the years that followed, he showered her with love.

Some of our friends liken my mother to Lydia, a first-century Christian woman who showed outstanding hospitality. (Acts 16:14, 15) But I often think of her as being like Sarah, who happily subjected herself to her husband, Abraham. (1 Pet. 3:4-6) My mother was a chaste, respectful, and deeply spiritual woman who touched all who knew her. It was her example that helped my father into the truth. To me, she was a true daughter of Sarah.

A Memorable Convention

FROM August 15-18, 1963, hundreds of publishers from across the country and 122 international visitors converged on the city of Bandung, West Java. They had come to attend the "Everlasting Good News" Assembly, the first international assembly to be held in Indonesia.

To prepare for the event, the brothers had to overcome numerous obstacles. The venue had to be changed three times because of national Independence Day celebrations. When rising inflation prompted the authorities to raise transport fares by 400 percent, some delegates simply adjusted their mode of transport. One brother walked six days to reach the assembly. Seventy delegates from Sulawesi traveled five days on the crowded open decks of boats to attend the event.

At the convention, the Indonesian delegates were thrilled to meet their Christian brothers and sisters from other lands, including two members of the governing body, Frederick Franz and Grant Suiter. One visiting delegate observed: "The brothers seem so happy here; they are always laughing and smiling."

Ronald Jacka (right) giving a talk at the 1963 "Everlasting Good News" Assembly and an interpreter

Over 750 people attended the assembly, and 34 were baptized. "The landmark gathering prompted many interested ones to take their stand for the truth," said Ronald Jacka. "It fired the local brothers with enthusiasm for God's work."

Ronald Jacka

BORN 1928

BAPTIZED 1941

PROFILE Served as branch servant in Indonesia for more than 25 years.

I Survived a Communist Uprising

IN THE early hours of October 1, 1965, troops linked to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) assassinated six prominent generals in an attempted coup. The government's response was swift and ruthless. In what has been described as a nationwide "orgy of violence," some 500,000 alleged communists were slaughtered.

Several weeks after the failed coup, a senior military commander told me that my name was at the top of a list of religious leaders in our area whom the communists had planned to liquidate. He even offered to show me where my grave had been dug in preparation for my burial, but I politely declined. In the highly charged political atmosphere, I did not want to be seen in his company and risk compromising my reputation as a Christian neutral.

Alisten Lumare

BORN 1927

BAPTIZED 1962

PROFILE A former police inspector who served as a special pioneer for over 50 years.

Fifty Years a Special Pioneer

IN 1964, I was assigned as a special pioneer to Manokwari, West Papua, where a small congregation faced fierce opposition from the local clergy. Soon after I arrived, a Protestant minister stormed up to my house.

"I am going to destroy this house and rid Manokwari of Jehovah's Witnesses," he thundered.

Because of my police training, I was not intimidated by his bluster. Nevertheless, I answered him calmly, and he eventually left in peace.—1 Pet. 3:15.

Back then Manokwari had eight publishers. Today, some 50 years later, there are seven congregations in the area. More than 1,200 people attended the local convention in 2014. When I see what Jehovah has accomplished in this remote region, I feel truly satisfied at heart.

Hisar Sormin

BORN 1911

BAPTIZED 1952

PROFILE Former head of an underworld crime gang who eventually became a member of the Branch Committee.

From Crime Boss to Respected Citizen

ON ONE occasion, Brother Sormin was summoned by the Director of Intelligence at the attorney general's office.

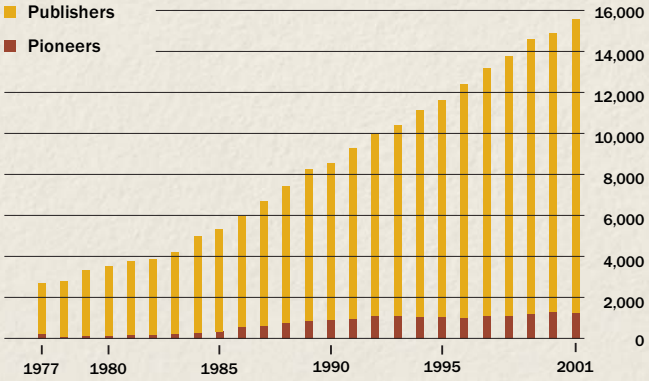
"You are Indonesian, so be frank with me," said the official. "What are Jehovah's Witnesses *really* doing in Indonesia?"

"Let me tell you my story," replied Brother Sormin. "I once was the leader of a criminal gang, but now I teach people the Bible. That is what Jehovah's Witnesses are doing in Indonesia—taking no-good people like me and turning them into good citizens!"

The Director of Intelligence later declared: "I hear many complaints about Jehovah's Witnesses. But I know that it is a good religion because it helped Mr. Sormin to change."

1977 to 2001

“Persecuted for Righteousness’ Sake.”—Matt. 5:10.



During an assembly held under ban, part of the audience listens from a boat

Determined to Move Forward

When the brothers at the branch learned of the ban, they swung into action. "We moved our confidential records, literature supplies, and branch funds to safe houses throughout Jakarta," says Ronald Jacka. "We then moved the branch office to a secret location and quietly sold the previous branch office buildings."

Most of the local brothers remained active and unafraid. They had endured severe trials leading up to the ban, and they continued to trust in Jehovah. But some brothers were caught off guard. A few elders became fearful and signed statements agreeing to stop preaching. Others revealed the names of congregation members. The branch office sent mature brothers to fortify the congregations and to help those who had compromised. John Booth, a member of the Governing Body, also visited Indonesia and passed on some much-needed fatherly advice.

Clearly, Jehovah, the Great Shepherd, was strengthening and comforting his people. (Ezek. 34:15) The elders began taking an increased spiritual lead, and the publishers found new and discreet ways to preach. (Matt. 10:16) Many brothers bought copies of a modern, affordable Bible from the Indonesian Bible Society and offered them to householders, tactfully including the Kingdom message where possible. Others removed the copyright page from our publications and distributed them to interested people. Many pioneers continued

to preach while posing as door-to-door salespeople, as their predecessors had done during the Japanese occupation.

Then, in 1977, the Department of Religious Affairs struck another blow—they refused to renew missionary visas for Jehovah's Witnesses. Most Witness missionaries were reassigned to other countries.* "Hundreds of brothers and sisters came to the airport to say goodbye," recalls missionary Norbert Häusler, who served with his wife, Margarete, in Manado, North Sulawesi. "We walked to the steps of the plane and paused to look

* Longtime missionaries Peter Vanderhaegen and Len Davis were past retirement age and Marian Tambunan (formerly Stoove) had married an Indonesian, so they were allowed to stay in Indonesia. All three remained spiritually active and had a fruitful ministry throughout the ban.

Margarete and Norbert Häusler

back. A sea of hands waved to us, and a collective cry echoed across the tarmac: 'Thank you. Thank you for being here.' We boarded the plane and wept."

Outrage on Sumba

As news of the ban spread throughout the archipelago, the Indonesian Communion of Churches urged its members to report any Witness activity to the authorities. This triggered a wave of arrests and interrogations on many islands.

In Waingapu, on the island of Sumba, the district military commander summoned 23 brothers to the local military camp and demanded that they sign a declaration renouncing their faith. When the brothers refused, the commander ordered them to return to the camp the following day—an eight-mile round-trip on foot.

When the brothers reported to the commander early the next morning, they were called forward one by one and ordered to sign the declaration. When a brother would refuse to sign, soldiers would beat him with thorny branches. The soldiers worked themselves into a frenzy, knocking some brothers unconscious. Meanwhile, the other brothers awaited their turn. Finally, one young brother named Mone Kele stepped forward and wrote on the declaration. The brothers' hearts sank, but the commander went berserk. Mone had written, "I intend to remain one of Jehovah's Witnesses forever!" Mone was beaten and bruised and ended up in the hospital, but he remained spiritually unbroken.

The commander tried for 11 days to break the brothers' integrity. He ordered them to stand all day in

"Being in prison taught me to depend on Jehovah more, and it actually made me spiritually stronger"

the hot tropical sun. He forced them to crawl on their hands and knees for several miles and to run long distances carrying heavy loads. While holding a bayonet at their throats, he commanded them to salute the flag; still, they refused. So he ordered that they be beaten some more.

Each morning the brothers trudged to the camp, wondering what new torments awaited them. Along the way, they prayed together and encouraged one another to stay loyal. And each night they shuffled home, bruised and bloodied, rejoicing that they had stayed faithful to Jehovah.

Upon learning of this mistreatment, the brothers at the branch office immediately telegraphed protests to the military commander in Waingapu, the regional military commander in Timor, the divisional military commander in Bali, the supreme military commander in Jakarta, and other key government authorities. Embarrassed that his vile actions were being publicized throughout Indonesia, the military commander in Waingapu stopped persecuting the brothers.

"Jehovah's Witnesses Are Like Nails"

In the years that followed, countless Witnesses throughout Indonesia were detained, interrogated, and physically abused. "In one area, many brothers had their front teeth knocked out," recalls missionary Bill Perrie. "When they met a brother who still had his front teeth, they would jokingly ask: 'Are you new?

Or have you been compromising?' Despite their trials, those who had been persecuted never lost their joy or enthusiasm for serving Jehovah."

During one 13-year period, 93 Witnesses were sentenced to jail terms ranging from two months to four years. Experiencing such mistreatment only strengthened their determination to stay loyal to Jehovah. After serving an eight-month jail term, Musa Rade visited the brothers in his area to encourage them to keep on preaching. "Being in prison taught me to depend on Jehovah more, and it actually made me spiritually stronger," he said. Little wonder that some observers declared: "Jehovah's Witnesses are like nails. The more you hammer them, the deeper they go in."

Publishers on their way to preach in Ambon, Maluku

They Did Not Forsake Meeting Together

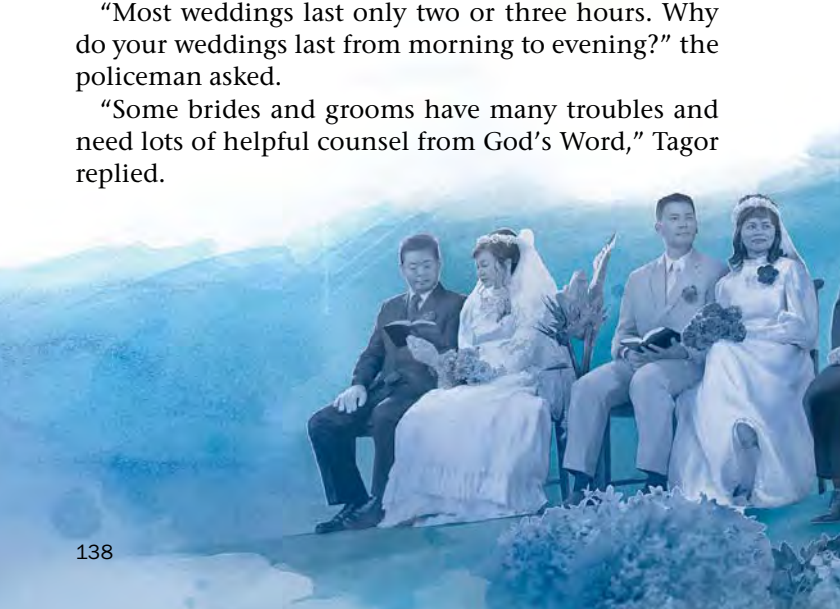
During the ban, most congregations continued to meet together for worship in private homes. To avoid attracting undue attention, however, many congregations did not sing Kingdom songs. Some meeting places were raided by the authorities, but usually the brothers were undisturbed.

The brothers often used family reunions or wedding celebrations as occasions to hold larger assemblies. “Couples typically registered their marriage and obtained a police permit to hold a large wedding reception,” explained Tagor Hutasoit. “During the reception, the bridal party sat on the platform while brothers presented a series of Bible talks.”

At one assembly a policeman approached Tagor privately.

“Most weddings last only two or three hours. Why do your weddings last from morning to evening?” the policeman asked.

“Some brides and grooms have many troubles and need lots of helpful counsel from God’s Word,” Tagor replied.



"That makes sense," nodded the policeman.

Under the cover of a multiple wedding, brothers presented part of the 1983 "Kingdom Unity" District Convention at a large Jakarta sports stadium. A peak of nearly 4,000 brothers and interested ones attended the convention, and 125 people were baptized privately before the program. Later, when the ban was less rigidly enforced, the brothers held even larger conventions, including one attended by over 15,000 people.

Wedding ceremonies were used to hold assemblies

Building a Branch Office While Under Ban

During the 1980's and 1990's, the branch office repeatedly petitioned the government to remove the ban on Jehovah's Witnesses. Brothers in other countries also wrote to the Indonesian government and its ambassadors, asking why Jehovah's Witnesses were outlawed in Indonesia. Many officials favored lifting the ban, but the powerful Directorate General of Christian Community Guidance repeatedly blocked their efforts.

In 1990, the brothers concluded that it might be possible to build a new branch office in an inconspicuous location. That same year, the Governing Body approved the purchase of a property near Bogor, a small city about 25 miles south of Jakarta. Few local brothers, however, had construction skills. How, then, would the new facility be built?

The answer came through the international brotherhood. The Brooklyn Construction Office and the Regional Engineering Office in Australia supplied the architectural plans. Some 100 international volunteers provided the needed expertise during the two-year project.

Hosea Mansur, an Indonesian brother who acted as a liaison with various local officials, related: "When Muslim officials saw my initials, H.M., on my hard hat, they assumed that the letter *H* stood for *'Hājjī,'* a highly esteemed title claimed by those who make pilgrimages to Mecca. They thus treated me with great respect. This simple misunderstanding made it easier to organize the work."

This branch office was built during the ban

The new branch facilities were dedicated on July 19, 1996. John Barr, a member of the Governing Body, delivered the dedication talk. The 285 people in the audience included 118 branch representatives and former missionaries from many countries and the 59 members of the Indonesia Bethel family. In the two days that followed the dedication program, 8,793 delegates attended the "Messengers of Godly Peace" District Convention in Jakarta.

Jehovah Delivers His People

In 1998, Indonesia's longtime President Soeharto (Suharto) resigned, paving the way for a new

government. In turn, the brothers intensified their efforts to have the ban on the work lifted.

While visiting New York in 2001, the Indonesian Secretary of State, Mr. Djohan Effendi, toured Brooklyn Bethel and met with three members of the Governing Body. He was impressed by what he saw, and he acknowledged that Jehovah's Witnesses had a good reputation worldwide. Mr. Effendi favored lifting the ban, but he said that the final word would have to come from the attorney general of Indonesia, Mr. Marzuki Darusman.

The attorney general also favored lifting the ban, but hostile officials in his department kept stalling in the hope that he would soon be replaced. Finally, on June 1, 2001, Tagor Hutasoit was summoned to the attorney general's office. "In that same office, some 25 years earlier, I was handed a document stating that Jehovah's Witnesses were banned," recalled Tagor. "But on this day, the attorney general's last day in office, he handed me a document revoking the ban."

On March 22, 2002, the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses in Indonesia was officially registered by the Department of Religious Affairs. The director-general of the department told branch representatives: "This registration document does not grant you freedom of worship. That freedom comes from God. This document states that your religion is officially recognized by the government. You now have the same rights as other religions, and the government is at your service."

Christian Love in Times of Disaster

EARTHQUAKES, tsunamis, and volcanoes often disrupt life in Indonesia. When these disasters strike, Jehovah's people are quick to help those who are affected, especially their spiritual brothers. For example, in 2005 a massive earthquake leveled Gunungsitoli, the largest town on Nias Island in North Sumatra. Congregations on the neighboring island of Sumatra and the branch office immediately shipped relief supplies to the affected area. The local circuit overseer and a branch office representative flew to the island to encourage and reassure the brothers. "People around us were paralyzed with fear," says Yuniman Harefa, an elder on Nias. "But the quick response from God's organization assured us that we were not alone."

Daniel Lokollo

BORN 1965

BAPTIZED 1986

PROFILE A special pioneer who stood firm under persecution.

We Would Not Compromise Our Faith

ON April 14, 1989, I was conducting a meeting in the town of Maumere, on Flores Island, when government officials burst into the house and arrested me and three others.

The guards at the local prison tried to force us to salute the flag. When we refused, they beat us and kicked us and made us stand in the blistering sun for five days. We shivered at night on hard cement floors in our tiny cells, filthy, exhausted, and aching from our wounds. The prison warden repeatedly urged us to compromise, but we replied, “Until we die, we will not salute.” Like countless Christians before us, we felt privileged to “suffer for the sake of righteousness.”—1 Pet. 3:14.

Blasius da Gomes

BORN 1963

BAPTIZED 1995

PROFILE An elder who lovingly cared for the flock during a religious conflict on Ambon, which is part of the Maluku Islands.

We Obeyed Direction—And Lived!

ON January 19, 1999, growing hostility between Muslims and Christians exploded into violence about three kilometers from my home. The situation was chaotic.*

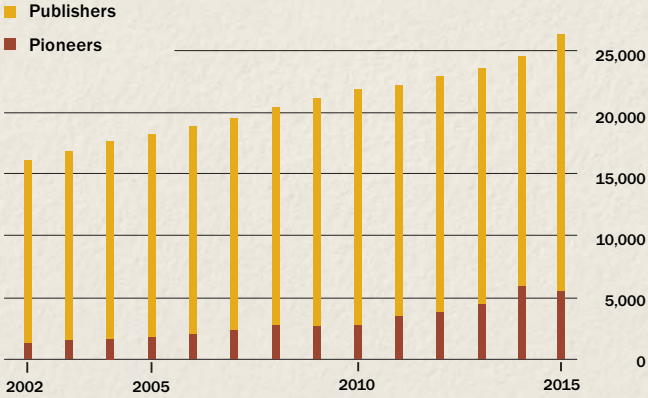
After seeing to the safety of my family, I phoned other publishers to check on their welfare. I urged them to remain calm and to avoid dangerous areas. Later, the elders visited the flock to strengthen them spiritually and to encourage them to meet for worship in small groups.

The branch office urged us to evacuate any publishers who were living in dangerous areas, and we passed that direction on to several families. One brother who refused to leave was later killed by an armed mob. But every person who heeded the direction from the branch office survived.

* The conflict raged throughout the province of Maluku for more than two years and drove tens of thousands of people from their homes.

2002 to 2015

The Work Forges Ahead



The Work Gains Momentum

When the leaders of the churches of Christendom heard that Jehovah's Witnesses had been granted freedom of worship, they cried out in anguish. More than 700 clergy and lay leaders from seven Protestant churches held a seminar in Jakarta to urge the government to reinstate the ban. But the government stood firm.

As news filtered around the country that the ban had been lifted, many interested people wrote to the branch office, asking for literature or Bible studies. In 2003, over 42,000 people attended the Memorial, more than double the number of publishers in the country. Nearly 10,000 people attended an assembly in Jakarta, including a high-ranking official from the Department of Religious Affairs. The official was amazed to see younger and older ones in the audience looking up cited scriptures in their copies of the Bible. He assured the brothers that he was determined to correct the misinformation about Jehovah's Witnesses.

The end of the ban also paved the way for missionaries to return to Indonesia. The first missionaries to return were Josef and Herawati Neuhardt* (from the Solomon Islands), Esa and Wilhelmina Tarhonen (from Taiwan), Rainer and Felomena Teichmann (from Taiwan), and Bill and Nena Perrie (from Japan). They were followed by new Gilead missionaries who were

* Herawati Neuhardt's life story appeared in the February 2011 issue of *Awake!*

assigned to North Sumatra, Kalimantan, North Sulawesi, and other outlying areas.

In 2005, the branch office conducted classes for two new theocratic schools. One of the instructors for the Ministerial Training School (now called the School for Kingdom Evangelizers), Julianus Benig, stated, "I really enjoyed helping the students to improve their teaching and speaking ability and to become even more useful to the organization." Many graduates of this school now serve as special pioneers or circuit overseers. Most of the brothers who attended the first class of the School for Traveling Overseers* had initially been trained while the work was under ban. The new school helped them to carry out their assignments after the ban had ended. Ponco Pracoyo, who attended the first class, stated: "The school helped me to be more empathetic and

* Now called the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives.

"I really enjoyed helping the students to improve their teaching and speaking ability."
—Julianus Benig

more responsible in carrying out my role as a circuit overseer. It was refreshing and motivating!"

Filling an Urgent Need

During the 25-year ban, most congregations in Indonesia met for worship in small private homes. Few congregations could afford to build a Kingdom Hall, and it was almost impossible to obtain building permits for new places of worship. With many congregations bursting at the seams, the branch office set up a Kingdom Hall Construction Desk (now called the Local Design/Construction Department) to address this urgent need.

One of the first areas to benefit from the new building program was Nias Island in North Sumatra. "When we heard that we were getting a new Kingdom Hall, we were elated," says Haogo'aro Gea, a longtime member of the Gunungsitoli Congregation. "The branch office sent seven construction volunteers to oversee the project. The hall was completed in 2001." Faonasökhi Laoli, a member of the local building committee, relates: "We previously met in small private homes, and the community looked down on Jehovah's Witnesses. But as soon as we finished the Kingdom Hall, our average meeting attendance jumped from 20 to 40. Within 12 months, it increased by over 500 percent. Our place of worship is the finest in the area, and the community views Jehovah's Witnesses with respect."

In 2006, in Bandung, West Java, brothers started searching for property to build the city's first Kingdom Hall. "It took 12 months to find a suitable property," says Singap Panjaitan, an elder who served on the building committee. "But we needed to get approval

from at least 60 non-Witness neighbors before the authorities would give us a building permit. Seventy-six neighbors supported the project, including one influential woman who had initially opposed us. When the hall was finished, we invited our neighbors and the mayor of Bandung to an open house. The mayor stated, 'This clean and tidy place of worship sets the standard for all other churches to imitate.' " The two-story Kingdom Hall was dedicated in 2010.

Since 2001, over 100 Kingdom Halls have been built in Indonesia, but many more are needed.

Kingdom Hall in Bandung

Proudly Declaring Jehovah's Name

During the many years under ban, the brothers in Indonesia wisely followed Jesus' counsel to "prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves." (Matt. 10:16) But when the ban ended, many needed to learn how to preach "with boldness."—Acts 4:31.

For example, some brothers hesitated to preach from door to door and focused on return visits and Bible studies. Others held back from speaking to Muslims. Many introduced themselves as Christians instead of as Jehovah's Witnesses and used Bible translations from Christendom rather than the Indonesian edition of the *New World Translation.** Others held back from distributing Bible literature freely.

Some of these habits were carried over from the ban. Others stemmed from local culture, which favors compromise over confrontation, subtlety over openness. How could the brothers be readjusted?

Jehovah provided the answer in the form of kindly counsel from spiritually mature brothers. (Eph. 4: 11, 12) For example, in 2010, visiting Governing Body member Stephen Lett warmly encouraged the brothers to uphold God's name by freely using the *New World Translation* in the ministry. "Brother Lett's talk deeply affected many publishers," says missionary Misja Beerens. "They saw the need to stand out as Jehovah's Witnesses and proudly defend God's Word."

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* The complete *New World Translation* in Indonesian was released in 1999. The translators labored seven years under ban to complete the project. Several years later, the two-volume Bible encyclopedia *Insight on the Scriptures* and the *Watchtower Library* on CD-ROM were released in Indonesian, a truly remarkable translation effort!

Since Indonesian Muslims often associate Jehovah's Witnesses with Christendom, the Indonesian edition of the *Kingdom Ministry* gave the following helpful direction: "Clearly identifying yourself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses *at the outset of your conversation* is often the best approach. . . . We proudly represent Jehovah, and we want to make his name and purposes known in our assigned territory!" Shinsuke Kawamoto, who serves at the branch office in Indonesia, relates: "This direct but tactful approach brings good results. Many Muslims are curious about Jehovah's Witnesses. They want to know what makes us different. Their curiosity allows us the opportunity to give a good witness."

Publishers were also encouraged to increase their distribution of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* "For people to get to know us, they need to read our magazines," explains Lothar Mihank, the Branch Committee coordinator. "Magazines soften the 'ground' and encourage people to be more receptive to the truth. When we distribute them far and wide, we give more people the opportunity to learn about Jehovah."

Public Witnessing Makes an Impact

In 2013, the Indonesia branch launched two new preaching initiatives approved by the Governing Body: special metropolitan public witnessing and congregation public witnessing. These exciting developments are allowing many more people in Indonesia the opportunity to hear the good news.

The first of several special metropolitan public witnessing tables was set up in a large electronics mall in West Jakarta. Then local congregations began setting

APAKAH ALKITAB MASIH BERMANFAAT?
SILAKAN AMBIL
GRATIS

up public witnessing carts and tables in their own territories. Within a year, more than 400 public witnessing tables and carts were operating in cities across Indonesia. What results have been achieved?

Yusak Uniplaita, an elder in Jakarta, reports: "Before we started public witnessing, our congregation requested 1,200 magazines a month. Six months later, we were requesting 6,000 magazines a month. Now we request 8,000 magazines a month. We also place many books and brochures." In Medan, North Sumatra, a small group of pioneers set up witnessing carts in three locations. During the first month, they placed 115 books and about 1,800 magazines. Two months later, some 60 pioneers in seven locations distributed over 1,200 books and 12,400 magazines. "These new preaching methods are exciting the brothers and revealing the spiritual potential in Indonesia," says missionary Jesse Clark. "Public witnessing is here to stay!"

Using the Language of the Heart

Indonesia lies at the heart of one of the most linguistically diverse regions on earth.* While most people speak Indonesian, the lingua franca, many also speak a local ethnic language—their language of the heart.

In 2012, the branch office decided to gauge the needs of this diverse language field. "We started by translating material into 12 local languages spoken by about 120 million people," says Tom Van Leemputten. "When our Javanese translators saw the first sample tract in Javanese, they shed tears of joy. At last, they had spiritual food in their own language!"

* Indonesia has 707 living languages, while its eastern neighbor, Papua New Guinea, has 838.

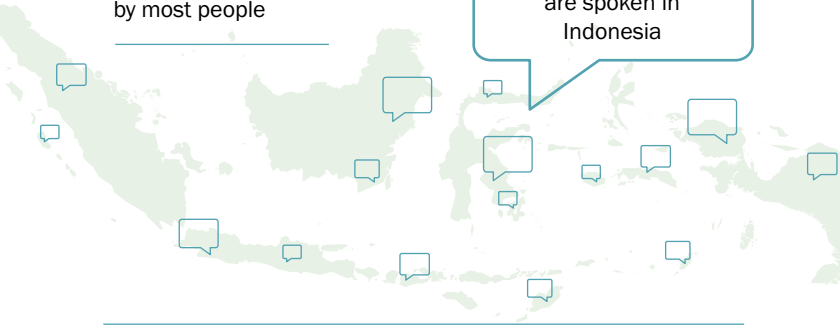
Most congregations, though, continued to hold meetings in Indonesian, even in areas where most people spoke an indigenous language. “In 2013, my wife, Carmen, and I attended a two-day assembly on Nias Island in North Sumatra,” recalls Lothar Mihank. “Most of the 400 people in the audience spoke the Nias language, but all of the talks were in Indonesian. After consulting with the speakers, we told the audience that the next day’s program would be in Nias. The next day, more than 600 people crammed into the auditorium.” Carmen adds: “It was obvious that those in the audience paid more attention to the program in Nias than they had the day before when the talks were given in Indonesian. They were delighted to hear—and fully understand—the Bible’s message in their language.”

Batak-Toba translation team in North Sumatra

TRANSLATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

INDONESIAN
is the common language spoken by most people

Some
707 languages
are spoken in Indonesia



TRANSLATION DEPARTMENT:

37 TRANSLATION TEAMS: 117 translators

Translating into **24 LANGUAGES**

Working in **19 LOCATIONS**

SIGN LANGUAGE:
Since 2010, two teams have produced **seven BROCHURES** and **eight TRACTS**

24 SIGN-LANGUAGE CLASSES have been held to train over **750 SIGNERS**

Even deaf people in Indonesia can now “hear” the truth in their own language. Since 2010, the Indonesian Sign Language translation team has produced seven brochures and eight tracts in Indonesian Sign Language. Additionally, the branch office has sponsored 24 sign-language classes that have trained over 750 signers. Today, 23 sign-language congregations and groups are giving spiritual help and comfort to an estimated three million deaf people living in Indonesia.

Currently, the Translation Department has 37 translation teams. There are 117 translators and 50 support personnel working in 19 locations across Indonesia.

A deaf person receiving spiritual help

Offices on the
31st floor

A Branch Office in the Sky

In 2008, Indonesia reached a peak of 21,699 publishers. The branch facilities were stretched to the limit. Also, because the facilities were built during the ban, they were in an out-of-the-way location. Clearly, a larger branch nearer to Jakarta was needed.

About two years later, the brothers purchased a property that was very different from the previous branch—the entire 31st floor of an ultra-modern 42-story office tower near central Jakarta. The brothers next bought 12 floors in a nearby apartment tower to accommodate 80 or more Bethelites. They also acquired a five-story building to house the Bethel Home departments.

A team of construction servants from different countries worked along with local contractors to remodel the offices and the apartments. "Jehovah repeatedly helped us through seemingly intractable problems," says construction overseer Darren Berg. "For example, we wanted to install a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant, but the authorities were unfamiliar with the technology and refused to approve it. Then a local Witness who is an engineer took our case to a senior official. The official promptly approved our request, stating that he completely trusted our brother's recommendation."

"We are not hiding anymore. People now notice Jehovah's Witnesses. They can see that we are here to stay"

The new branch facilities were dedicated on February 14, 2015. Governing Body member Anthony Morris III gave the dedication talk. "We are now located in a prestigious district among some of the leading corporations in Indonesia," says Vincent Witanto Ipikkusuma, a member of the Branch Committee. "We

Branch Committee, from left to right: Budi Sentosa Lim,
Vincent Witanto Ipikkusuma, Lothar Mihank, Hideyuki Motoi

Service Department on the 31st floor

"Need-greaters play an important role in countries like ours."
—Lothar Mihank

are not hiding anymore. People now notice Jehovah's Witnesses. They can see that we are here to stay."

"Preaching Here Is a Feast!"

In recent years, growing numbers of Witnesses from around the globe have moved to Indonesia. "Need-greaters play an important role in countries like ours," explains Lothar Mihank. "They bring experience, maturity, and enthusiasm to their congregations, and they help to build greater appreciation for the worldwide brotherhood." What motivated them to move? And how have things worked out for them? Consider some of their comments.

Jason and Casey Gibbs from the United States relate: "We studied the population-to-publisher ratios in the *Yearbook* and discovered that Indonesia has one of the highest ratios in the world. Then some friends who were need-greaters told us that there was great potential in Indonesia. So we phoned the Indonesia branch, and they directed us to Bali. The English field

in Indonesia was just starting to open up, so we would be able to make an impact right away. We planned to go for one year, but we've stayed three. Most people we preach to have never heard of Jehovah's Witnesses. How rewarding the ministry is!"

Stuart and Mandy Williams, a middle-aged couple from Australia, state: "We wanted to meet people thirsting for the truth, so we decided to move to Indonesia. In Malang, East Java, we have met hundreds of English-speaking university students who eagerly listen to the good news. And they *love* the jw.org website! The preaching work here is awesome."

Takahiro and Mari Akiyama, who pioneer in Yogyakarta, on the island of Java, relate: "Here we feel safer than we did at home in Japan. People are kind and polite. Many of them, especially the young people, are curious about other religions. One day while manning our public witnessing table, we placed about 2,600 magazines in only five hours."

Dan and Janine Moore, a couple in their late 50's, explain: "When we go preaching, people gather around us. We smile at them; they smile back. They are curious, then interested, then excited. When we show them something in the Bible, some say, 'Can I write that down?' They marvel at the Bible's spiritual wisdom. We've been here for a year, and we're sorry we didn't come earlier. We were looking for the next preaching frontier—and we've found it!"

Misja and Kristina Beerens came as missionaries in 2009 and now serve in the traveling work. They report: "Even on Madura Island in East Java, one of the most

Need-Greaters

1. Janine and Dan Moore

2. Mandy and Stuart Williams

3. Casey and Jason Gibbs

4. Mari (front right) and Takahiro Akiyama (back right)

1

2

3

conservative Muslim areas in Indonesia, the response to our preaching work is fantastic. People stop their cars and ask for magazines. They say: 'I'm Muslim, but I enjoy reading these magazines. Can I have extra for my friends?' Preaching here is a feast!"

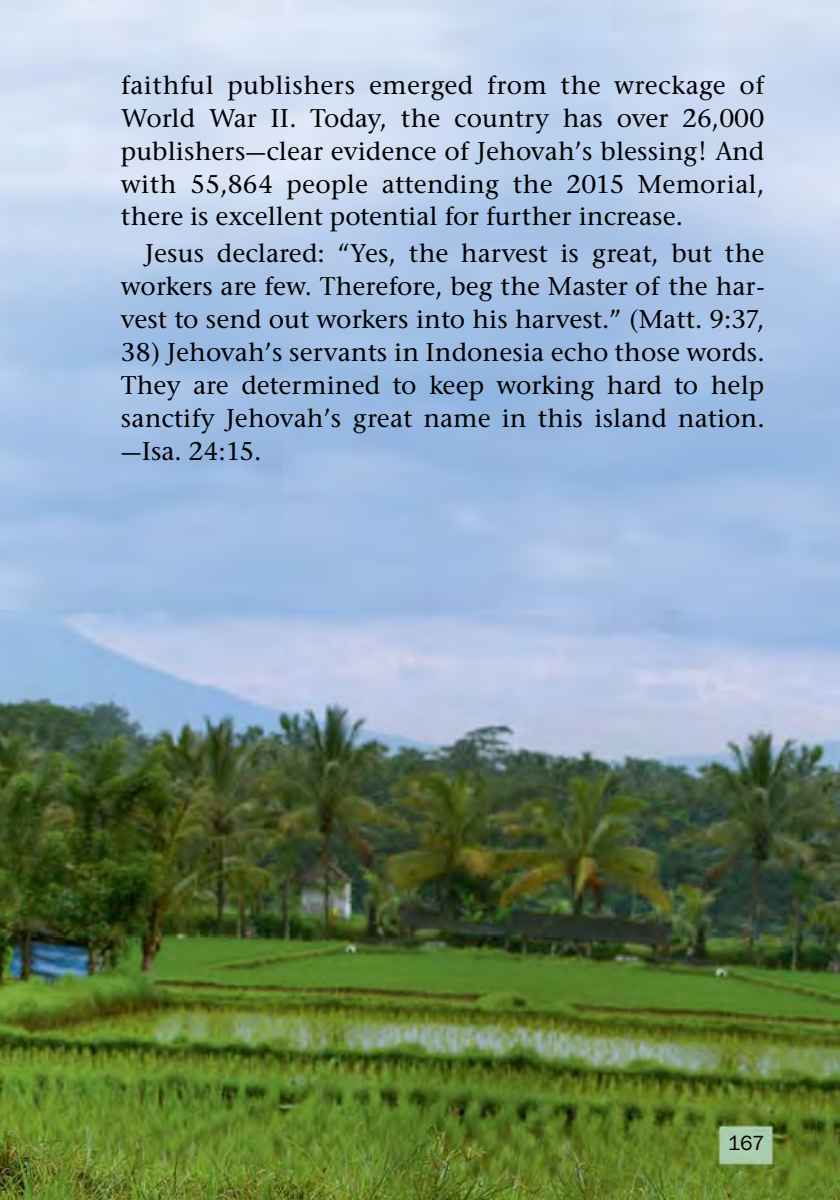
Fields White for Harvesting

In 1931, when Frank Rice arrived in Jakarta, some 60,000,000 people lived in Indonesia. The population today is approaching 260,000,000, making Indonesia the fourth most populous nation on earth.

Meanwhile, Jehovah's Witnesses in Indonesia have also experienced remarkable growth. In 1946, ten

faithful publishers emerged from the wreckage of World War II. Today, the country has over 26,000 publishers—clear evidence of Jehovah's blessing! And with 55,864 people attending the 2015 Memorial, there is excellent potential for further increase.

Jesus declared: "Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Matt. 9:37, 38) Jehovah's servants in Indonesia echo those words. They are determined to keep working hard to help sanctify Jehovah's great name in this island nation. —Isa. 24:15.



Angeragō Hia

BORN 1957

BAPTIZED 1997

PROFILE Returned to his remote home village on Nias Island and established a congregation.

Jehovah Surpassed Our Expectations!

IN 2013, our small congregation in Tugala Oyo heard thrilling news—we would receive a new Kingdom Hall! The local authorities welcomed the project, and 60 of our neighbors signed a petition giving their approval. One neighbor told us, “If you want 200 signatures, you will get them.”

Two experienced Kingdom Hall construction volunteers came to supervise the building of the new hall, which was completed in November 2014. We never dreamed that our congregation would ever have such a fine place for worship. Truly, Jehovah surpassed our expectations!

Reunited at Last!

—As told by Linda and Sally Ong

Linda: When I was 12, my mother revealed that I had a younger sister who had been given up for adoption. I wondered if she had been born deaf like me. But I grew up not knowing who she was.

Sally: I never knew that I was adopted. My "mother" cruelly beat me and treated me like a servant, so I grew up sad and lonely—an added burden for one born deaf. Then I met Jehovah's Witnesses and began studying the Bible. When my "mother" found out, she whipped me with a belt and changed the locks on the door, imprisoning me in the house. At age 20, I ran away from home, and the Witnesses took me in. In early 2012, I was baptized.

Linda: When I was 20, I started studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. Later, I began attending district conventions in Jakarta, where the program was interpreted for the deaf. There I met many other deaf people, including Sally, a Witness girl who lived in North Sumatra. I felt a certain familiarity with her but thought nothing of it.

Sally: Linda and I became good friends. I thought that we looked alike, but I dismissed the notion as a passing thought.

Linda: In August 2012, the day before I was baptized, I felt a deep longing to find my lost younger sister. "Please let me find my sister," I begged Jehovah, "because I want to tell her about you." Soon afterward, my mother unexpectedly received a text message from a person who knew about my lost sister. This set in motion a chain of events that led to my contacting Sally.

Sally: When Linda explained that I was her long-lost sister, I quickly flew to Jakarta to meet her. Exiting airport security, I saw Linda—along with my father, my mother, and my other older sister—waiting to greet me. I was shaking with emotion. We all hugged and kissed—my mother held me the longest. Everyone was crying. When my father and mother tearfully apologized for having given me up for adoption, we cried and hugged some more.

Linda: Because of our different upbringings, we have had to learn to accommodate our different personalities and habits. But we love each other very much.

Sally: Now Linda and I live together and attend the same sign-language congregation in Jakarta.

Linda: Sally and I were separated for more than 20 years. We thank Jehovah that we are reunited at last!

One Hundred Years Ago 1916

Hardworking pilgrims were among Brother Russell's associates

AS 1916 dawned, the Great War, later known as World War I, had been raging for more than a year. Losses on both sides were staggering.

The Watch Tower of January 1, 1916, observed: "One influence of the great European war is to turn the minds of some toward religion and the consideration of a future life." The same article continued: "Let us be alive to our privileges, our opportunities, that there may be no faintheartedness, but a zeal for God and His Message."

The yeartext for 1916 exhorted the brothers to remain "strong in faith," according to Romans 4:20 in the *King James Version.* Many of the Bible Students did so, and they reaped rich blessings from Jehovah.

Pilgrims Provided Encouragement

Traveling representatives of the Watch Tower Society, known as pilgrims, journeyed from town to town, providing encouragement and instruction to the Bible Students. In 1916, at least 69 pilgrims traveled half a million miles in this work.

While speaking at a convention in Norfolk, Virginia, pilgrim Walter Thorn compared the Christian's fight to the Great War: "It is estimated that there are from twenty to thirty millions of men now under arms. . . . Unknown to the world, there is another company [of soldiers]. They are the Lord's soldiers, and like Gideon's band, they also are fighting, but not with carnal weapons. They are fighting for truth and righteousness and they are fighting the good fight of faith."

Serving Despite Wartime Difficulties

In France, more than one million men were wounded or killed in the First Battle of the Somme, which was fought during the latter half of 1916. Elsewhere in France, hardworking brothers supported the classes, or congregations, even when wartime conditions made this difficult. *The*

Watch Tower of January 15, 1916, printed a letter from Joseph Lefèvre, a Bible Student who was forced to flee his hometown of Denain, France, when it was invaded by German troops in 1914. He made his way south to Paris and began to associate with the only class of Bible Students in that city. Despite his poor health, he was soon conducting all the meetings.

Later, Joseph was joined by Théophile Lequime, who had also fled Denain. Initially, Brother Lequime went to Auchel, France, where he began translating articles from *The Watch Tower* and mailing them to brothers in other unoccupied sections of France. He was compelled to leave Auchel by military authorities who grew suspicious of his activities. Brother Lefèvre felt that Brother Lequime's arrival in Paris was an answer to his prayers.

Their work in Paris was rewarded. Brother Lefèvre reported: "We have a class now of about forty-five . . . A number have known the beauty and privilege of consecration, and they are making large strides in spiritual progress. Nearly all the members attend the weekly testimony meeting."

They Remained Neutral

As the war dragged on, many of our brothers faced the issue of neutrality. In Great Britain, the Military Service Act was passed, eventually imposing conscription on all men aged 18 to 40. However, many Bible Students steadfastly maintained their neutrality.

For example, *The Watch Tower* of April 15, 1916, published a letter from W. O. Warden of Scotland. He stated: "One of my sons has now reached the age of 19. He has so far given a good witness for the Lord by refusing to enlist in the army, and if it should come that it will mean being shot for still refusing, I trust he will receive the Heav-

enly Grace to stand firm to the principles of truth and righteousness."

James Frederick Scott, a young colporteur from Edinburgh, Scotland, was tried for failing to report for conscription. After hearing all the evidence, however, the court concluded that Brother Scott "came under the exception provided by the Act" and found him not guilty.

Nevertheless, many others were refused exemption. By September, of the 264 brothers who applied for exemption, 23 were assigned noncombatant service. The remainder, some of whom "suffered various punishments," were required to perform "work of National Importance, such as road-making, quarrying, etc.," said a report in the October 15, 1916, *Watch Tower.* Only five brothers were exempted from military service.

Charles Taze Russell Dies

On October 16, 1916, Charles Taze Russell, who took the lead among the Bible Students at that time, embarked on a lecture tour of the western United States. He never returned home. In the early afternoon of Tuesday, October 31, Brother Russell died at the age of 64 while aboard a train at Pampa, Texas.

Many of the brothers could not imagine anyone taking Brother Russell's place. His will, published in *The Watch Tower* of December 1, 1916, outlined his wishes regarding the work that he had taken the lead in for so long. Yet, a question remained: Who would succeed him in this work?

That question would be decided at the annual meeting of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, scheduled for early 1917. Those in attendance took a vote, and the results were unanimous. But the ensuing months revealed that this unanimity was to be short-lived, and fiery trials awaited the brothers.

2015 Grand Totals

Branches of Jehovah's Witnesses:	89
Number of Lands Reporting:	240
Total Congregations:	118,016
Worldwide Memorial Attendance:	19,862,783
Memorial Partakers Worldwide:	15,177
Peak of Publishers in Kingdom Service:	8,220,105
Average Publishers Preaching Each Month:	7,987,279
Percentage of Increase Over 2014:	1.5
Total Number Baptized:	260,273
Average Auxiliary Pioneer Publishers Each Month:	443,504
Average Pioneer Publishers Each Month:	1,135,210
Total Hours Spent in Field:	1,933,473,727
Average Home Bible Studies Each Month:	9,708,968

During the 2015 service year, Jehovah's Witnesses spent over $236 million in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments. ■ Worldwide, a total of 26,011 ordained ministers staff the branch facilities. All are members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Memorial Commemoration
Friday, April 3, 2015

ON Saturday, March 7, 2015, congregations earth wide began a four-week campaign to invite as many people as possible to meet with us to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and to hear a discourse about how his death benefits us. Millions of invitations were given in person, by telephone, and by mail. What would the response be? How happy Jehovah's Witnesses were on Friday, April 3, when they welcomed 19,862,783 to this sacred occasion. Now every effort is being made to help all those in attendance to associate actively with Jehovah's people, to worship the true God, and to enjoy his tender love and rich blessings.—Mic. 4:2.

Millions of Invitations Given

in person | by telephone | by mail

The Response:

19,862,783

in attendance

2015 Service Year Report
of Jehovah's Witnesses Worldwide

Letter and number following each country's name indicates the country's location on maps following this chart.

Country or Territory	Population	2015 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, 1 Publisher to	2015 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 2014	2014 Av. Pubs.	2015 No. Bptzd.	Av. Aux. Pio. Pubs.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Albania (D-11)	3,204,000	5,415	592	5,381	4	5,190	228	540	1,223	86	1,914,716	6,132	12,945
American Samoa (N-26)	57,642	233	247	218		218		11	33	3	63,610	351	835
Andorra (F-4)	79,330	181	438	170	1	169	4	9	18	3	35,375	113	320
Angola (N-6)	24,383,301	115,948	210	111,123	8	102,753	7,462	5,748	13,748	1,565	30,712,362	502,848	529,827
Anguilla (O-32)	13,600	71	192	62	-3	64	2	4	3	2	13,384	108	252
Antigua (P-32)	80,200	472	170	462	-3	478	3	29	43	7	94,796	570	1,230
Argentina (N-36)	42,657,055	148,565	287	147,379	1	145,277	4,888	9,893	19,913	2,014	35,136,722	126,606	315,790
Armenia (G-9)	3,026,900	11,117	272	11,019		10,978	260	1,001	2,221	142	3,457,851	7,555	23,318
Aruba (Q-29)	109,028	975	112	953	2	931	35	39	65	14	165,652	1,009	2,922
Australia (O-19)	23,884,166	67,606	353	66,753		66,484	1,605	3,114	5,639	797	11,948,544	29,751	116,022
Austria (F-5)	8,584,926	21,338	402	21,216	1	20,990	403	1,106	1,464	300	3,784,884	11,990	34,359
Azerbaijan (G-9)	9,593,000	1,351	7,101	1,303	7	1,220	105	136	327	13	496,937	1,838	2,674
Azores (G-1)	246,353	739	333	730	-2	748	16	48	90	15	181,291	871	1,680
Bahamas (G-35)	388,000	1,686	230	1,630		1,630	50	85	207	27	374,274	2,077	4,198
Bangladesh (J-14)	160,995,642	255	631,355	243	15	211	13	14	96	6	105,200	554	993
Barbados (Q-33)	277,800	2,557	109	2,506	-1	2,524	61	154	201	30	455,496	2,262	6,531
Belarus (E-7)	9,496,000	5,918	1,605	5,828	4	5,579	173	506	1,290	76	1,915,608	4,989	10,212
Belgium (E-4)	11,209,044	25,497	440	24,661	1	24,531	489	1,166	1,601	370	4,045,368	10,895	43,325
Belize (H-33)	347,900	2,567	136	2,515	4	2,425	120	137	475	62	751,033	4,325	8,705
Benin (L-4)	10,880,000	12,430	875	11,716	3	11,352	486	766	1,591	186	3,356,769	29,253	41,706
Bermuda (F-36)	62,000	526	118	448	-3	463	18	18	82	5	115,621	340	909
Bhutan (H-14)	775,480	3	258,493	3	100			1			953	3	7
Bolivia (M-36)	10,725,000	25,174	426	24,836	4	23,976	1,265	2,394	4,676	329	7,912,833	42,201	77,110
Bonaire (Q-30)	18,905	122	155	118	2	116	3	5	15	2	27,545	169	357
Bosnia and Herzegovina (C-10)	3,791,622	1,189	3,189	1,170	-1	1,180	13	89	188	16	332,446	551	1,972
Botswana (O-6)	2,262,000	2,153	1,051	2,099	-1	2,122	93	147	271	46	566,268	4,552	6,323
Brazil (L-37)	204,873,755	805,044	254	787,470	3	767,449	28,349	41,958	91,055	11,802	172,695,296	863,612	1,743,624
Britain (E-3)	62,863,330	137,631	457	134,491		134,308	2,286	6,738	13,063	1,605	24,867,057	60,066	225,584
Bulgaria (F-7)	7,284,500	2,368	3,076	2,290	7	2,149	120	135	613	53	811,728	2,962	5,267
Burkina Faso (K-3)	18,106,000	1,743	10,388	1,656	4	1,598	99	103	271	44	497,487	3,328	4,499
Burundi (M-7)	9,231,000	13,132	703	12,577	6	11,852	823	1,084	1,861	269	4,223,708	39,049	50,743
Cambodia (K-16)	15,577,899	924	16,859	894	11	802	43	35	498	14	449,816	2,239	2,251
Cameroon (L-5)	22,637,185	41,376	547	37,869	1	37,319	1,455	1,867	4,145	339	9,394,420	73,129	97,390
Canada (C-31)	36,162,252	115,234	314	114,123		113,617	1,688	6,375	12,121	1,397	22,870,030	54,805	187,322
Cape Verde (K-1)	545,993	2,143	255	2,098	3	2,042	104	140	411	35	634,354	4,423	8,033
Cayman Islands (H-34)	60,000	223	269	217	-5	228	6	11	27	3	51,668	232	651
Central African Republic (L-6)	4,900,000	2,613	1,875	2,544	3	2,471	131	133	314	53	692,466	7,874	16,350
Chad (K-6)	14,037,000	710	19,770	687	6	646	37	33	69	17	172,985	1,304	4,582
Chile (M-35)	18,006,407	76,296	236	75,168	1	74,498	2,458	5,392	11,583	963	19,684,208	64,178	174,761
Chuuk (L-21)	48,651	42	1,158	37	-23	48		3	12	1	17,373	136	230

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Colombia (J-35)	49,367,000	166,373	297	165,089	2	161,876	5,885	8,753	23,732	2,550	41,318,347	222,442	510,952
Congo, Dem. Republic of (M-6)	77,267,000	206,309	375	176,585	-2	180,343	10,274	7,829	18,387	3,642	42,707,866	556,852	1,131,161
Congo, Republic of (M-5)	4,620,000	7,448	620	6,080	-2	6,193	149	339	466	77	1,668,830	20,438	25,444
Cook Islands (O-26)	13,313	217	61	194		194		12	20	3	38,202	203	469
Costa Rica (J-34)	4,819,000	30,115	160	29,601	2	29,086	863	1,429	3,337	433	6,446,313	34,861	69,247
Côte d'Ivoire (L-3)	22,671,331	10,607	2,137	10,302	5	9,781	544	769	1,599	293	3,256,150	28,496	64,724
Croatia (B-9)	4,290,612	5,427	791	5,372	-1	5,412	186	350	485	67	1,097,863	2,250	8,472
Cuba (G-34)	11,258,597	96,487	117	95,825		95,592	3,624	6,716	9,791	1,524	19,107,502	172,538	231,958
Curaçao (Q-30)	156,971	2,033	77	1,987	3	1,931	100	106	190	25	393,300	2,337	5,463
Cyprus (H-7)	885,600	2,575	344	2,536	3	2,467	64	169	406	40	639,822	1,840	4,609
Czech Republic (E-5)	10,541,466	16,269	648	15,471		15,407	291	847	1,077	226	2,636,242	7,274	26,177
Denmark (D-4)	5,678,348	14,652	388	14,564	1	14,462	140	719	923	179	2,415,133	6,023	21,527
Dominica (P-33)	72,700	450	162	437	3	423	9	18	69	10	112,093	722	1,448
Dominican Republic (O-29)	10,478,756	37,536	279	36,946	2	36,240	1,445	2,490	7,337	567	11,606,518	69,892	120,103
Ecuador (K-34)	16,278,844	87,020	187	85,468	4	82,547	5,336	6,030	14,201	1,002	23,538,094	142,010	260,366
El Salvador (H-33)	6,142,600	40,013	154	39,643	1	39,346	835	2,024	5,467	685	9,195,509	45,286	92,188
Equatorial Guinea (L-5)	810,613	1,918	423	1,653	5	1,574	122	99	213	15	489,580	5,801	6,860
Estonia (D-6)	1,313,271	4,095	321	4,074		4,091	85	237	493	54	840,294	2,723	6,793
Ethiopia (L-8)	99,391,000	10,083	9,857	10,013	3	9,768	496	702	2,316	217	3,377,845	7,570	25,323
Falkland Islands (Q-37)	2,840	11	258	11	10	10	1	1		1	1,696	9	26
Faroe Islands (C-2)	50,145	119	421	112	-4	117	1	5	31	4	32,937	105	192
Fiji (N-24)	887,027	3,097	286	2,958	1	2,938	231	179	487	78	745,243	4,615	11,845
Finland (C-7)	5,471,753	18,574	295	18,496		18,588	221	746	2,001	303	3,069,284	10,468	25,924
France (F-4)	64,200,000	127,444	504	125,519	1	124,298	2,365	7,434	14,049	1,702	27,364,109	58,530	219,748
French Guiana (J-37)	241,922	2,429	100	2,373	4	2,288	78	152	374	46	689,167	5,425	9,401
Gabon (M-5)	1,756,708	4,216	417	3,972	4	3,816	169	257	519	38	1,149,145	8,906	11,646
Gambia (K-2)	1,990,924	252	7,900	230	11	208	10	7	42	4	62,093	388	579
Georgia (G-9)	3,729,500	18,531	201	18,279	1	18,100	502	1,181	3,197	229	4,569,185	8,796	32,569
Germany (E-5)	81,083,551	165,754	489	163,871		163,246	2,647	7,101	12,308	2,187	28,343,642	77,941	270,447
Ghana (L-3)	27,451,357	129,046	213	124,004	4	119,199	5,062	5,014	12,890	1,852	30,107,656	400,672	353,891
Gibraltar (G-3)	29,833	129	231	127	2	124	2	9	21	2	32,314	55	174
Greece (G-6)	10,787,690	28,816	374	28,592		28,677	617	1,675	4,133	390	6,607,009	13,237	46,822
Greenland (A-38)	55,984	155	361	145		145	3	6	24	6	33,091	142	351
Grenada (Q-32)	109,600	602	182	579		578	3	30	80	10	134,780	719	1,534
Guadeloupe (P-32)	410,335	8,192	50	8,058		8,025	183	419	621	120	1,516,962	8,625	19,763
Guam (K-20)	159,358	790	202	740	1	733	23	46	116	9	190,844	1,037	1,943
Guatemala (H-33)	14,941,600	38,766	385	38,140	3	37,192	1,360	2,139	5,646	881	9,765,437	49,613	97,106
Guinea (K-2)	11,750,000	835	14,072	765	4	737	49	45	118	19	225,496	1,884	3,136
Guinea-Bissau (K-2)	1,844,325	149	12,378	141	6	133	8	13	31	3	67,461	507	701
Guyana (J-37)	782,359	3,013	260	2,941	3	2,846	105	166	433	46	704,966	5,062	12,837
Haiti (O-28)	9,993,000	20,516	487	19,552	3	18,899	902	1,202	2,774	275	5,320,115	42,074	86,029
Honduras (H-33)	8,758,900	23,130	379	22,653	3	22,077	1,093	1,350	4,262	433	6,756,205	35,739	67,573
Hong Kong (J-17)	7,298,600	5,590	1,306	5,509	-1	5,557	191	427	1,018	68	1,670,339	6,062	9,619
Hungary (A-10)	9,855,000	22,582	436	22,400		22,444	555	1,333	1,980	296	4,576,242	12,163	39,727

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Iceland (B-1)	329,000	382	861	367		368	4	19	51	7	79,372	271	692
India (J-12)	1,299,213,900	42,566	30,522	41,866	6	39,355	2,902	3,116	6,196	587	10,070,577	54,005	120,601
Indonesia (M-17)	256,000,000	26,238	9,757	25,361	4	24,489	1,066	2,193	3,269	465	6,808,314	31,168	55,864
Ireland (E-2)	6,676,364	6,422	1,040	6,281	1	6,210	120	336	884	119	1,424,752	3,563	11,779
Israel (H-8)	8,548,984	1,567	5,456	1,511	4	1,450	42	95	220	26	392,851	1,262	3,242
Italy (G-5)	60,795,612	251,032	242	250,277	1	248,871	4,911	18,696	33,944	2,997	60,979,620	119,827	435,046
Jamaica (H-34)	2,793,300	11,911	235	11,815	-1	11,889	348	561	1,504	188	2,437,190	13,561	37,111
Japan (G-19)	126,573,481	215,216	588	214,523		215,294	2,160	19,480	65,354	3,059	81,576,771	166,049	300,406
Kazakhstan (F-11)	17,563,000	17,797	987	17,545		17,475	559	1,435	3,449	248	5,247,691	12,791	31,435
Kenya (M-8)	47,233,491	28,005	1,687	26,578	3	25,820	1,267	1,177	3,544	619	6,924,219	46,515	66,820
Kiribati (M-24)	104,607	150	697	136	-4	142		17	39	3	45,801	310	418
Korea, Republic of (G-18)	50,293,000	100,544	500	99,950		100,289	3,045	9,579	39,347	1,358	46,188,497	79,826	134,894
Kosovo (D-11)	2,350,000	241	9,751	236		237	6	16	85	6	113,454	483	574
Kosrae (L-22)	6,616	24	276	20	18	17	1	3	6	1	8,413	56	118
Kyrgyzstan (G-12)	5,895,062	5,134	1,148	5,071	3	4,936	202	437	1,058	67	1,541,668	5,297	10,838
Latvia (D-6)	2,000,000	2,303	868	2,275	-1	2,296	47	149	347	36	594,514	2,058	3,750
Lebanon (H-8)	5,053,624	3,734	1,353	3,671		3,659	66	191	183	57	595,115	2,206	6,533
Lesotho (P-7)	2,135,000	4,123	518	3,837	-1	3,871	133	168	430	90	909,831	6,774	10,266
Liberia (L-2)	4,190,000	6,475	647	6,112	1	6,022	440	227	738	126	1,755,648	21,661	44,716
Liechtenstein (F-4)	37,370	91	411	85	-3	88	4	3	2	1	10,292	41	135
Lithuania (D-6)	2,898,062	3,140	923	3,101	-1	3,130	68	192	474	50	796,224	2,655	5,018
Luxembourg (E-4)	562,958	2,058	274	2,042	1	2,028	6	113	126	32	363,097	1,118	3,895
Macao (J-17)	642,900	310	2,074	294	-1	298	13	19	69	4	103,742	356	715
Macedonia (D-11)	2,108,434	1,318	1,600	1,293	-2	1,323	37	100	194	24	357,297	1,040	2,903
Madagascar (O-9)	24,967,390	32,426	770	30,941	5	29,385	1,780	1,633	5,198	696	9,133,114	79,143	131,087
Madeira (H-1)	258,686	1,192	217	1,147	1	1,134	23	78	103	17	251,283	825	1,935
Malawi (N-8)	16,000,000	89,626	179	80,776	-2	82,671	5,958	3,303	6,547	1,447	15,775,188	116,274	296,711
Malaysia (L-16)	30,986,035	4,897	6,328	4,804	3	4,668	175	288	1,263	116	1,639,860	8,671	12,539
Mali (K-3)	17,599,694	295	59,660	284	-1	286	23	26	55	7	112,954	854	1,163
Malta (G-5)	419,000	692	605	665	7	623	18	29	75	8	123,877	235	1,192
Marshall Islands (L-23)	53,158	223	238	183	7	171	9	13	31	4	52,953	474	914
Martinique (P-32)	395,027	4,820	82	4,755		4,749	138	268	562	64	1,090,051	5,376	10,613
Mauritius (O-10)	1,330,000	1,815	733	1,785	2	1,749	54	102	149	25	355,012	2,093	4,124
Mayotte (N-9)	230,338	162	1,422	147	13	130	3	10	46	3	56,682	352	338
Mexico (G-31)	121,856,500	832,981	146	818,481	2	802,903	21,764	34,264	136,512	13,088	202,740,223	1,064,408	2,242,804
Moldova (F-7)	4,069,000	19,972	204	19,776		19,846	531	1,203	2,223	240	4,143,138	13,863	35,813
Mongolia (F-15)	2,959,134	445	6,650	435	7	405	39	38	181	9	199,142	797	1,280
Montenegro (D-10)	631,490	278	2,272	270	2	265	11	29	57	6	98,495	181	589
Montserrat (P-32)	4,900	21	233	19	6	18		1	9	1	8,897	71	108
Mozambique (O-7)	25,727,911	57,144	450	53,027	3	51,637	2,773	1,972	4,900	1,154	10,935,184	90,657	291,356
Myanmar (J-15)	54,647,652	4,149	13,171	4,099	4	3,941	115	124	546	74	857,564	4,134	8,438
Namibia (O-5)	2,459,000	2,306	1,066	2,247	2	2,208	31	120	271	44	554,371	4,381	7,726
Nauru (M-23)	10,436	14	745	11	-27	15		1	1	1	1,227	14	92
Nepal (H-13)	27,153,225	2,251	12,063	2,204	10	2,004	141	134	753	36	817,986	4,515	7,268

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Netherlands (E-4)	16,956,486	30,042	564	29,508		29,495	529	1,339	1,696	360	4,677,702	12,421	51,743
Nevis (P-32)	12,100	64	189	56	6	53		2	2	1	8,817	55	213
New Caledonia (O-23)	270,710	2,277	119	2,164	6	2,047	100	163	185	30	487,664	2,901	6,473
New Zealand (Q-24)	4,618,522	14,224	325	13,929		13,884	397	683	1,251	185	2,582,505	8,408	26,008
Nicaragua (H-33)	5,912,800	27,707	213	27,054	3	26,169	821	1,397	4,132	484	7,067,722	44,264	88,843
Niger (K-4)	19,899,000	282	70,564	272	-4	282	14	7	40	7	69,565	377	805
Nigeria (L-4)	182,201,962	367,103	496	338,955	3	329,757	12,573	11,995	36,968	6,145	72,505,273	798,359	739,234
Niue (O-26)	1,190	26	46	24	-4	25		1	3	1	4,708	20	54
Norfolk Island (P-23)	1,329	6	222	5	-38	8				1	507	3	19
Norway (C-4)	5,189,400	11,598	447	11,472	1	11,359	111	517	940	166	1,937,038	5,614	17,889
Pakistan (H-12)	188,925,000	1,021	185,039	960	3	928	73	46	99	18	200,900	1,248	4,035
Palau (L-19)	21,108	89	237	80	3	78	5	6	19	2	26,883	182	233
Palestinian Territory (H-8)	4,680,000	74	63,243	71	1	70	3	3	12	2	17,444	72	167
Panama (J-34)	3,661,000	16,572	221	16,224	4	15,626	584	982	2,773	313	4,428,058	24,236	54,213
Papua New Guinea (M-20)	7,708,577	4,228	1,823	3,916	1	3,868	230	245	415	106	952,176	7,078	34,707
Paraguay (M-37)	6,917,579	10,023	690	9,719	4	9,309	469	594	1,592	216	2,811,125	15,165	24,298
Peru (L-35)	31,151,643	124,897	249	120,260	3	117,211	4,866	9,317	27,755	1,419	39,683,210	196,798	383,251
Philippines (K-18)	100,621,100	201,761	499	199,551	5	190,930	10,146	12,440	38,813	3,246	49,798,859	268,598	576,542
Pohnpei (L-22)	35,981	73	493	69	-7	74	2	6	20	1	22,996	158	212
Poland (E-6)	38,478,602	122,021	315	121,018	-1	122,381	1,885	6,385	7,958	1,327	19,140,641	52,256	191,524
Portugal (G-2)	9,869,783	48,840	202	48,633		48,706	1,076	3,211	4,288	644	10,037,634	28,687	91,472
Puerto Rico (O-31)	3,683,200	25,832	143	25,585		25,709	600	1,529	3,535	324	5,966,791	16,309	56,404
Réunion (O-10)	843,617	3,010	280	2,980	1	2,961	72	191	330	37	689,321	2,450	6,297
Rodrigues (O-11)	41,669	52	801	48	12	43		5	5	1	11,740	65	122
Romania (F-6)	21,240,000	40,575	523	40,370		40,371	890	2,169	3,831	548	7,809,840	25,623	78,300
Rota (K-20)	2,477	10	248	9	-10	10		2	3	1	4,177	15	26
Russia (C-15)	146,042,093	175,615	832	172,977	5	165,322	4,526	12,952	30,963	2,547	48,858,784	113,529	294,180
Rwanda (M-7)	11,262,564	26,680	422	25,061	7	23,507	1,722	2,264	4,496	589	9,541,885	67,184	83,107
Saba (O-32)	2,000	13	154	12	71	7		1	2		3,422	36	54
St. Barthélemy (O-32)	9,269	28	331	26	8	24		2	5	1	8,080	34	97
St. Eustatius (P-32)	3,100	24	129	22		22		1	3	1	5,798	48	84
St. Helena (N-3)	4,000	122	33	118	3	115	1	2		3	9,821	65	272
St. Kitts (O-32)	46,000	218	211	203		203	12	9	34	4	53,493	278	773
St. Lucia (Q-33)	173,800	773	225	727	-2	740	34	39	104	11	194,300	1,220	2,296
St. Maarten (O-32)	37,400	391	96	340	1	336	3	15	38	5	76,529	450	1,147
St. Martin (O-32)	36,522	323	113	313	1	311	4	15	28	5	68,998	525	1,037
St. Pierre and Miquelon (D-37)	6,299	14	450	14	-7	15		1	5	1	5,198	6	22
St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Q-32)	109,344	346	316	336	1	332	11	32	44	8	94,908	511	1,139
Saipan (K-20)	48,220	215	224	194	-2	198	1	16	35	2	55,010	314	557
Samoa (N-25)	193,483	547	354	519	-1	522	29	28	79	12	140,678	792	2,065
San Marino (F-5)	32,890	208	158	202	-1	204		16	32	2	56,121	115	351
São Tomé and Príncipe (M-4)	194,006	773	251	754	6	708	73	70	150	11	279,619	3,041	3,226
Senegal (K-2)	15,129,273	1,194	12,671	1,168	2	1,150	42	83	148	26	328,746	2,010	2,606
Serbia (C-11)	8,118,146	3,895	2,084	3,861		3,857	73	303	609	61	1,057,663	2,273	7,939

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Seychelles (M-9)	91,650	347	264	333	1	331	10	24	33	4	81,926	414	935
Sierra Leone (L-2)	6,092,000	2,166	2,813	2,037	5	1,937	147	114	242	37	565,540	5,242	9,553
Slovakia (F-6)	5,421,433	11,386	476	11,276	2	11,105	291	567	819	142	1,861,585	4,135	21,623
Slovenia (B-8)	2,068,000	1,985	1,042	1,911	-1	1,930	50	121	232	30	447,571	1,064	2,942
Solomon Islands (M-22)	584,020	1,962	298	1,915	7	1,787	127	72	265	51	409,908	2,316	9,807
South Africa (P-6)	54,490,000	100,082	544	96,631	1	95,369	3,779	4,830	11,164	2,108	21,975,559	140,789	250,754
South Sudan (L-7)	11,864,683	1,308	9,071	1,218	1	1,201	139	71	164	33	310,442	3,132	4,682
Spain (G-3)	46,439,864	111,411	417	109,457	1	108,900	2,197	7,906	14,414	1,533	27,364,771	57,290	190,233
Sri Lanka (L-13)	21,416,445	5,902	3,629	5,775	3	5,615	211	346	794	108	1,317,282	8,564	15,415
Sudan (K-7)	40,720,640	608	66,975	595	16	515	54	47	87	16	181,266	1,583	2,308
Suriname (J-37)	540,000	2,896	186	2,849	3	2,765	132	261	287	55	671,767	5,218	9,889
Swaziland (P-7)	1,287,000	3,124	412	3,063	3	2,983	58	122	265	92	640,177	4,403	8,841
Sweden (B-6)	9,804,082	22,446	437	22,236		22,156	594	994	2,203	315	3,837,623	10,394	35,366
Switzerland (F-4)	8,237,666	19,219	429	18,611	2	18,323	347	861	1,046	270	2,978,799	9,285	31,755
Tahiti (M-27)	268,207	3,132	86	3,079	3	2,990	167	237	456	44	831,361	4,335	8,822
Taiwan (J-17)	23,465,003	9,703	2,418	9,582	4	9,256	387	858	3,123	142	3,949,344	14,631	19,261
Tanzania (M-8)	51,420,567	16,255	3,163	16,129	2	15,761	856	678	1,900	475	3,982,299	33,373	55,355
Thailand (K-15)	67,959,000	4,405	15,428	4,258	6	4,022	137	278	1,410	106	1,699,727	6,611	8,715
Timor-Leste (N-18)	1,250,000	301	4,153	284	17	242	16	23	67	4	108,447	601	750
Tinian (K-20)	3,136	23	136	15		15		1	3	1	4,294	29	43
Togo (L-4)	7,305,000	23,112	316	19,067	5	18,158	905	1,304	1,858	282	5,014,266	59,501	67,069
Tonga (O-25)	105,894	233	454	208	-4	216	8	13	31	3	51,553	299	628
Trinidad & Tobago (R-33)	1,333,100	9,679	138	9,543		9,503	260	662	1,216	122	2,092,005	11,331	24,103
Turkey (G-8)	77,700,000	2,611	29,759	2,514	4	2,408	79	189	399	31	704,250	1,705	4,546
Turks and Caicos (N-29)	34,300	340	101	332	3	323	12	21	59	6	98,477	686	1,060
Tuvalu (M-24)	9,894	86	115	64	7	60		1	1	1	7,900	72	247
Uganda (L-7)	36,076,000	7,112	5,073	6,832	6	6,468	363	489	1,046	142	2,159,573	19,559	23,157
Ukraine (E-7)	42,529,112	142,736	298	141,364	-6	149,787	3,922	10,834	19,672	1,566	34,985,826	84,590	236,261
United States of America (E-32)	321,773,600	1,231,867	261	1,195,081	1	1,186,598	28,358	56,455	167,404	14,063	268,657,014	737,471	2,475,339
Uruguay (O-37)	3,424,567	12,031	285	11,614	1	11,471	302	655	960	158	2,209,082	9,501	23,583
Vanuatu (N-23)	269,442	743	363	557	6	525	34	22	82	12	138,329	1,370	3,720
Venezuela (J-36)	30,851,300	142,117	217	138,860	3	134,913	6,721	10,205	27,532	1,807	41,575,997	197,284	433,763
Virgin Islands, British (O-31)	30,100	263	114	256	-2	260		15	32	4	59,617	251	825
Virgin Islands, U.S. (O-31)	106,300	626	170	586	-3	602	22	36	85	10	147,276	591	1,743
Wallis & Futuna Islands (N-25)	14,315	50	286	44	-4	46	3	2	5	1	10,158	72	174
Yap (L-19)	11,376	30	379	28		28	1	2	8	1	11,292	110	136
Zambia (N-7)	15,077,660	177,695	85	171,167	1	168,693	9,855	5,598	13,612	2,806	34,270,962	379,165	809,840
Zimbabwe (O-7)	15,576,901	45,072	346	43,361	4	41,688	2,302	2,633	5,462	1,185	11,190,296	100,248	114,500
30 Other Lands		38,833		35,795	7.3	33,372	2,194	3,173	13,150	844	17,166,611	66,167	74,469
Grand Total (240 Lands)		**8,220,105**		**7,987,279**	**1.5**	**7,867,958**	**260,273**	**443,504**	**1,135,210**	**118,016**	**1,933,473,727**	**9,708,968**	**19,862,783**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
A B C D E F G H J K L M N O P Q R
GREENLAND
ICELAND
FAROE ISLANDS
NORWAY
SWEDEN
FINLAND
RUSSIA
ALASKA
ESTONIA
LATVIA
LITHUANIA
BELARUS
KALININGRAD
POLAND
DENMARK
ISLE OF MAN
NORTHERN IRELAND
IRELAND
BRITAIN
NETHERLANDS
GERMANY
GUERNSEY
JERSEY
BELGIUM
LUXEMBOURG
FRANCE
CZECH REP.
AUSTRIA
SLOVAKIA
UKRAINE
MOLDOVA
SWITZERLAND
LIECHTENSTEIN
ANDORRA
ROMANIA
BULGARIA
MONACO
SAN MARINO
ITALY
PORTUGAL
SPAIN
AZORES
GIBRALTAR
MADEIRA
GREECE
TURKEY
GEORGIA
ARMENIA
AZERBAIJAN
KAZAKHSTAN
KYRGYZSTAN
UZBEKISTAN
TURKMENISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
MONGOLIA
DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA
REPUBLIC OF KOREA
JAPAN
CHINA
NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN
TUNISIA
MALTA
CYPRUS
LEBANON
SYRIA
ISRAEL
IRAQ
IRAN
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
NEPAL
BHUTAN
BANGLADESH
MYANMAR
INDIA
MOROCCO
CANARY ISLANDS
WESTERN SAHARA
ALGERIA
LIBYA
EGYPT
PALESTINIAN TERRITORY
JORDAN
KUWAIT
SAUDI ARABIA
BAHRAIN
QATAR
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
OMAN
YEMEN
MIDWAY
TAIWAN
HONG KONG
MACAO
LAOS
THAILAND
CAMBODIA
VIETNAM
PHILIPPINES
WAKE ISLAND
HAWAII
CAPE VERDE
MAURITANIA
SENEGAL
MALI
NIGER
CHAD
SUDAN
ERITREA
DJIBOUTI
SOMALIA
SOCOTRA
GAMBIA
BURKINA FASO
GUINEA BISSAU
GUINEA
SIERRA LEONE
LIBERIA
GHANA
NIGERIA
BENIN
TOGO
CÔTE D'IVOIRE
SÃO TOMÉ & PRÍNCIPE
EQUATORIAL GUINEA
CAMEROON
CENTRAL AFRICAN REP.
SOUTH SUDAN
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
KENYA
RWANDA
BURUNDI
TANZANIA
CONGO, REP.
CONGO, DEM. REP.
GABON
ASCENSION
ST. HELENA
ANGOLA
ZAMBIA
MALAWI
ZIMBABWE
NAMIBIA
BOTSWANA
MOZAMBIQUE
SWAZILAND
SOUTH AFRICA
LESOTHO
TRISTAN DA CUNHA
SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN
INDIAN OCEAN
SRI LANKA
MALDIVES
SEYCHELLES
COMOROS
MAYOTTE
MAURITIUS
REUNION
RODRIGUES
MADAGASCAR
KERGUELEN ISLANDS
INDONESIA
MALAYSIA
SINGAPORE
BRUNEI
PHILIPPINES
TINIAN
SAIPAN
ROTA
GUAM
YAP
PALAU
CHUUK
POHNPEI
KOSRAE
NAURU
MARSHALL ISLANDS
CHRISTMAS ISLAND
KIRIBATI
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
TIMOR-LESTE
COCOS ISLANDS
SOLOMON ISLANDS
TUVALU
TOKELAU
WALLIS & FUTUNA ISLS.
VANUATU
FIJI
SAMOA
AMERICAN SAMOA
NIUE
TONGA
COOK ISLANDS
NEW CALEDONIA
NORFOLK ISLAND
AUSTRALIA
NEW ZEALAND
HUNGARY
SLOVENIA
CROATIA
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA
SERBIA
MONTENEGRO
KOSOVO
MACEDONIA
ALBANIA
GREECE
ITALY

27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38
A B C D E F G H J K L M N O P Q R
GREENLAND
CANADA
ST. PIERRE & MIQUELON
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN
BERMUDA
BAHAMAS
MEXICO
CAYMAN ISLANDS
CUBA
PACIFIC OCEAN
BELIZE
JAMAICA
HONDURAS
GUATEMALA
EL SALVADOR
NICARAGUA
COSTA RICA
PANAMA
VENEZUELA
GUYANA
SURINAME
FRENCH GUIANA
COLOMBIA
GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS
ECUADOR
MARQUESAS ISLANDS
BRAZIL
PERU
TUAMOTU ARCHIPELAGO
BOLIVIA
TAHITI
AUSTRAL ISLANDS
PITCAIRN ISLAND
CHILE
PARAGUAY
ARGENTINA
URUGUAY
TURKS & CAICOS
VIRGIN ISLANDS (BRITISH)
ANGUILLA
ST. MAARTEN
ST. MARTIN
HAITI
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ST. BARTHÉLEMY
ST. KITTS
NEVIS
PUERTO RICO
VIRGIN ISLANDS (U.S.)
SABA
ANTIGUA
GUADELOUPE
ST. EUSTATIUS
MONTSERRAT
DOMINICA
MARTINIQUE
ST. LUCIA
ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES
BARBADOS
ARUBA
CURAÇAO
-BONAIRE
GRENADA
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
FALKLAND ISLANDS
SOUTH GEORGIA
27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38

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My 2016 Service Report

	Placements (Printed and Electronic)	Video Showings	Hours	Return Visits	Number of *Different* Bible Studies Conducted
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					
Total					